

TOWARDS A RELEVANT PACIFIC THEOLOGY



THEOLOGICAL CONSULTATION
Bergengren House, Suva
8 — 12 July 1985



TOWARDS A RELEVANT PACIFIC THEOLOGY

The Role of the Churches and
Theological Education

A Report of a Theological Consultation
held in Bergengren House, Suva, Fiji

8-12 July 1985

Organised by the Pacific Conference of Churches,
the Pacific Theological College and
the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The Pacific-wide Theological Consultation which was held in Suva from 8-12 July, 1985 was separately suggested at two different levels. The first was suggested at the Fourth Assembly of the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) held in Tonga in May of 1981. Unlike previous assemblies, Tonga talked a good deal about theology and theological education in general. During the discussions participants expressed their views and made useful suggestions on a good number of things including Pacific theology, Pacific history as well as the possibility for PTC to start a new Masters Degree for the Region. On the subject of Pacific theology, the Assembly recommended a workshop or a series of workshops to be held during the five year period prior to the next Assembly, that is in 1986. The PCC Secretariat began to give some thought to this as early as 1982.

At another level, the PTC governing Council actively followed the discussions both in Tonga and also before that. In its Annual Meeting of January 27-29, 1982, the Council asked the Executive and the Principal to consult the Programme on Theological Education (PTE), of the World Council of Churches together with the General Secretary of PCC concerning ways and means of furthering the development of the College in the next ten years. The PTE was asked to arrange for a team to visit PTC and the local theological colleges in the region in order to conduct a serious study of the issues involved and help PTC to plan its future development. The general scope of the study process included:

1. development of PTC
2. relationship of PTC with other theological colleges
3. theological education of women in the Pacific
4. Pacific theology
5. Master's Programme.

The team which was made up of Professor Charles Forman, Dr Russell Chandran and the Principal of PTC came together in June 1984 and began work from then until August of the same year. After this time of intensive work, the team thought it wise and appropriate to conclude the study with a Pacific-wide Consultation of representatives of Churches and Colleges to work out concrete steps for action. From then onwards the study team was already talking with PCC of jointly organising a consultation. The organising Committee was made up of representatives of PCC, PTC, the Visitation Team and the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools (SPATS), under the leadership of SPATS Chairman, the Rev Faitala Talapusi.

This brief background note explains the title of this report, "Towards a Relevant Pacific Theology: the Role of Churches and Theological Education". The Consultation did not aim at producing a Pacific Theology as such but it was designed to allow both the churches and theological schools in the Pacific to continue to move towards it through discussion as well as

writing. Theological education, as this is carried out in schools, does not pretend to know all about theology or Pacific theology for that matter. This is done with and by the whole church. But schools have their specific role to play especially in terms of preparing men and women for ministry and also in the area of research.

The themes of the consultation are directly related to these issues. The articulation of a relevant Pacific theology cannot be separated from the search for a Pacific identity; the changing role of women in Pacific societies, churches and theological education; the struggle for justice and peace in the vulnerable Pacific island world; the search for forms of spirituality which are true to the cultural and historical context as well as the Gospel; and the facing up to the possibilities and influences of both modern and traditional forms of communication.

The consultation recommendations focus on the need for cooperation at all possible levels. Both local schools and PTC need to strengthen their teaching staff, rethink their standards and procedures for entrance, improve their libraries and take more seriously the place of women in ministry and theological education.

The place of the Pacific Theological College is particularly important as a central theological institution serving the churches in the various island countries of the South Pacific. PTC is keenly aware of the rising educational standard everywhere in the South Pacific and the time has come for the college to take a step forward.

The Visitation Team, together with the PTC Faculty, have recommended that the Master's Programme should begin with Church History as the field of study with special emphasis on Pacific Church History as this is seen through the eyes of people's perspectives and people's development. The movement towards this post-graduate programme should not be seen as just another post-graduate programme that one may find anywhere else in the world. The initial central thrust aims at strengthening the much needed Pacific-wide solidarity of peoples and churches, and also to aid in the articulation of Pacific theology. It was Bernard Narakobi of Papua New Guinea who said in the Assembly in Tonga in 1981 that "we live in a history others have made or created for us". The proposed Master's Programme to begin at PTC in 1987; its purpose and intention should be understood as a humble response to that kind of concern which is shared by many in the Pacific today.

A good number of people have worked together to make the consultation possible and to bring this report to completion. First, we want to thank all those Mission Boards and Councils for funds received to enable the Visitation Team to carry out its work as well as the Consultation itself. Among them we want to mention the Protestant Association for World Mission, Hamburg, West Germany, the National Council of Churches in the USA, the Methodist Church in Great Britain and also all those organisations and funding agencies that support the work of the Pacific Conference of Churches. Not least in this category, we

want to thank the Programme on Theological Education of the World Council of Churches and its Director, Dr Sam Amirtham, for the support and advice right from the start up until now.

We also want to thank CEVAA for their keen interest in the development of theological education in the Pacific and for making it possible for Samuel Akle to attend the Consultation on their behalf. The French-speaking parts of the Pacific, New Caledonia and French Polynesia, are too often neglected in a predominantly English-speaking area. To ensure that this was not repeated during the Consultation, a Mini-Consultation of French-speaking delegates was held immediately after the main consultation. A report on this is included. We want to thank especially Anne Quehen of the PCC office for the big task she carried out by translating English papers into French and also for serving as Interpreter during the Consultation itself.

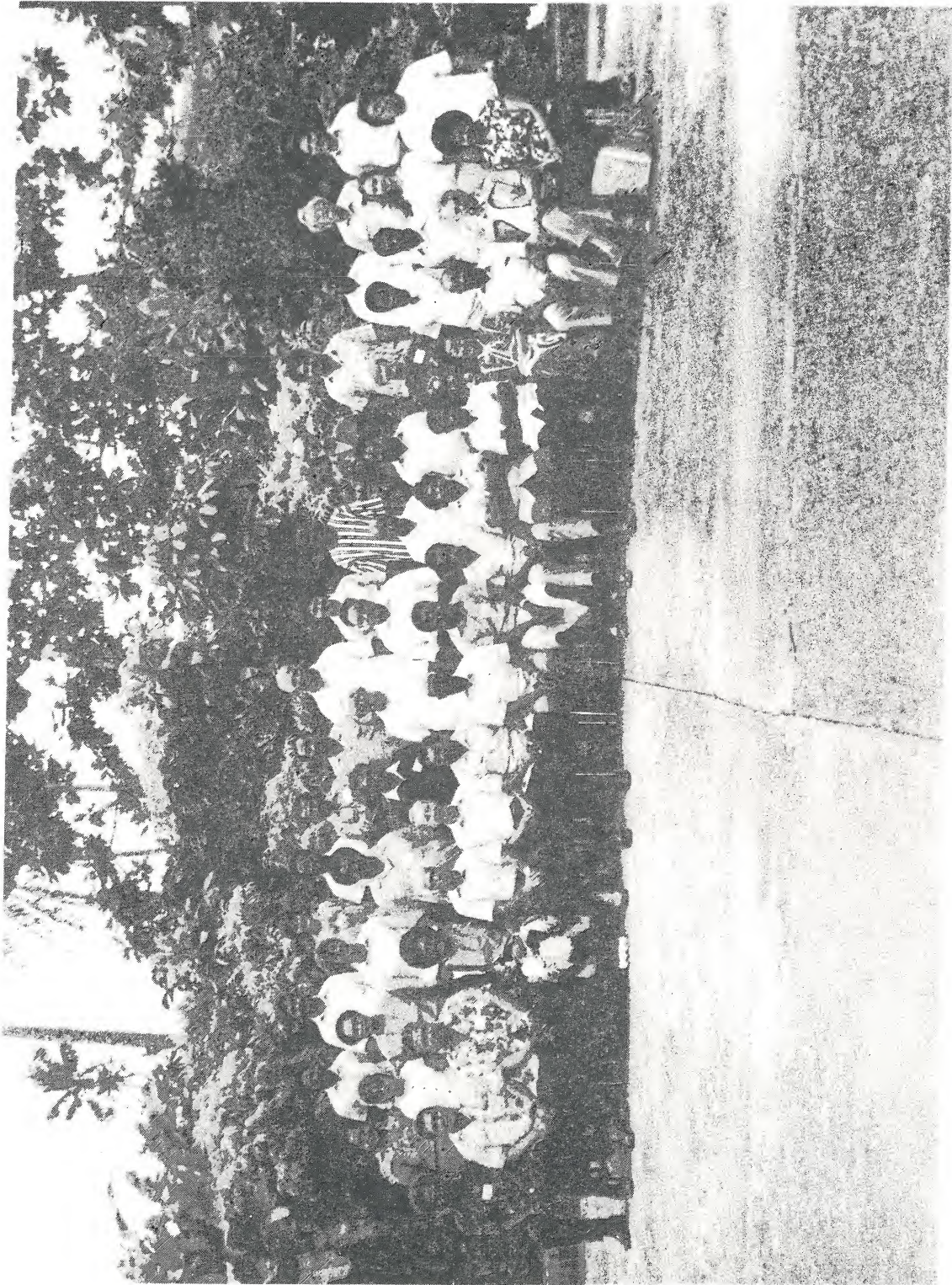
Three members of the PTC faculty did the initial editing work, Raeburn Lange, Stanley Good, and Bruce Deverell who also did the final work of editing. All this was made possible even in the midst of their teaching duties and other responsibilities in the College. A special word of thanks should go to Judith Finau who has transcribed the discussions in plenary and group reports, assisted by Emily Marseu, and also typed the Report in its final form, and also to Anne Quehen and Eliane Waengene for typing the French edition.

As usual, Fesaitu Marseu, a PTC graduate and now Assistant Minister of Wesley Church in Suva, has again come up with a highly imaginative cover design and we thank him for this. To all the members of the Visitation Team and the Organising Committee, we say, Vinaka Vakalevu.

A number of excellent Background papers were written for the Consultation particularly by schools within the SPATS area. These will be published in the renewed Pacific Journal of Theology which we hope will come out before the PCC Fifth Assembly.

The Consultation was jointly organised by the Pacific Conference of Churches and the Pacific Theological College, together with our partners overseas. Both the PCC and the PTC were conceived in Malua, Western Samoa in 1961. This year, as we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of PCC, and twenty years of PTC service to the Pacific World it is our hope and prayer that we will stay and grow together in the next 25 years.

PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS



CEREMONIES OF WELCOME AND WORSHIP

The Opening Ceremony of Welcome known as "a i galogalovi" (using the Tabua or whale's tooth) followed by the presentation of "yagona" (kava plant) or "a i sevusevu" were observed according to Fijian tradition when these were offered to the Distinguished Guests of Honour. This took place in the front courtyard of Bergengren House in Suva, in brilliant sunshine before a representative assembly who, after mingling freely together, had gathered in a wide semicircle and sat informally on the ground around a group of about eight men who were making the presentation on behalf of the Churches in the Pacific to the Guests of Honour.

The Guests of Honour included Dr Mahe Tupouniua, a member of the Free Church of Tonga and the Director of the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation; the Hon Tupuola Efi, a Roman Catholic and the Leader of the Opposition in the Western Samoan House of Parliament; Mr Samuel Akle a member of the Protestant Methodist Church of Benin in the People's Republic of Benin, West Africa, who was attending the Consultation as the official representative of the Communauté Évangélique d' Action Apostolique of which he is Associate General Secretary.

In his reply, Dr Tupouniua stated "We feel at home now. A warm feeling of goodwill, friendship, mutual acceptance and trust has been generated. This embraces us all, like the sunshine in which we have been sitting."

The Opening Devotions took place in the Main Assembly Room and were led by Rev Ilaitia Sevati Tuwere, the Principal of the Pacific Theological College, Suva. There were four components in this Act of Worship:

1. Following the traditional welcome outside, the devotions began with this same welcome based on the Whale's Tooth or Tabua. During this Meditation the Tabua was passed around, inspected at close quarters, and touched by each participant.
2. A formal Order of Worship under the symbol of the Tabua which was named "Ratu Yauvoli". The first of the two readings was in French from Genesis 12: 1-9, the Call of Abraham; the second in English from Luke 9: 51-62, the Final Journey of Jesus to Jerusalem. The Opening Hymn "The Church's One Foundation", expressed the expectation of the saints that in the end the Church would become what she was called to be, while the closing Chorus, "Through the Wilderness", provided a realistic reminder (if such were needed) that the wilderness must first be passed through by all who would journey to the Kingdom.
3. An Exercise in Imagination, entitled "The never-ending Journey of Ratu Yauvoli" composed specially for the occasion in the Fijian sense by Mrs Nina Tuwere.

4. Prayers in a contemporary mode, offered for our healing, for all faiths, and for reconciliation.

In these four ways a strong initial emphasis was placed on Jesus the object and perfecter of our faith whose life is marked by his availability to be with and for others. His readiness to go 'from place to place' is the source for hope and a programme for the Church in the South Pacific as everywhere else in the world.

* * * * *

CONFERENCE PAPERS
PLENARY DISCUSSIONS and GROUP REPORTS

PACIFIC IDENTITY AND PACIFIC THEOLOGY

OPENING ADDRESS

TOWARDS A RELEVANT PACIFIC THEOLOGY

by Mahe U Tupouniua

I was asked to speak with you on the subject of a Relevant Pacific Theology. The inference of course is that there is a distinct variant of theology which could be called Pacific Theology.

Let me say right at the start that I believe the Pacific churches are justified in fostering something like a Pacific theology - for exactly the same reasons that we talk about a Pacific Way. The Pacific Way as you know is a way of viewing life and society. It has to do with the way we approach and do things, the way we respect other people, the way we order our priorities, the way we solve problems by consensus rather than argumentation, the basic give-and-take attitude which characterises much of our Pacific culture; in other words our tolerance, the way we share what little we have, that is our generosity. The Pacific Way is a pragmatic philosophy about life in its totality that is distinctly Pacific in character. (1)

Those few words are by way of background material. But let me make this point now. The basic thought I want to put forward to this consultation is this. A Pacific Theology to be relevant, effective and reflective of the philosophical and spiritual insights of the peoples of the Pacific will need to be firmly rooted in the rich soil of the Pacific Way.

Next I want to make the assertion that the Pacific region has more to contribute to the world than its size would suggest, and that this contribution will be enhanced through Pacific theology reflecting the Pacific Way, which in turn is a reflection of the distinct philosophical insights of Pacific peoples. If Pacific theology has a contribution to the current world situation, which I believe it has, then its impact is more likely to be maximised if Pacific theology embraces and articulates the Pacific Way as I have tried to define it, in a way that makes it possible for Pacific theology to be fully shared by others. A Pacific theology that is not shared by others would be a contradiction of the Pacific Way of sharing. It would be un-Pacific and unacceptable.

Given then that there is a Pacific theology, however such a theology is defined [and I suspect that this would be one of the objectives which the Consultation will try to bring out] how do you then make this Pacific Theology relevant? How do you make it work? How do you translate Pacific Theology into action in such a way that it is shared and made better able to address the realities of contemporary life in the Pacific region?

I was also asked to speak from the standpoint of a layman looking at the kind of role theology and the Church might have in the Pacific of

the 80s. Since then, however, I have seen the programme for the week's activities and I note that there has been a slight shift in emphasis. The change need not be a disadvantage.

The central theme according to the programme is "Theological Education in the Pacific". This suggests focussing on the 'substance' of theological education - what kind of theology ought we to teach at our theological institutions? - Pacific Theology?, or any one of its various subdivisions - Melanesian Theology? or Polynesian Theology?

Now, if we are to look at Pacific theology from a locational standpoint based on geography, or ethnicity, then logically we should go on to ask why not a theology based on some other symbol of the Pacific? like Coconut, for example. What is there to stop theology from delving into other areas like politics and start us enquiring about a theology of justice? a theology of liberty, of the "haves" and the "have nots"? Theoretically, we could go on, I suppose, to talk about a theology of colour and get us on track towards a white theology, a black theology, or even a brown theology.

I have broached these questions because I have seen them mentioned in some of the available literature on Pacific theology. However, I will leave the answers to those who will be speaking after me regarding the actual substance of Pacific theological education. For my part I have said that I believe there is, there could be, and there should be a Pacific theology just as there is a Pacific Way. But as a layman I have to confess that that is about as far as I could go in the debate on "which Theology".

You see, I have reservations about the other forms or variants of theology. Indeed the second basic point I wish to make with you this morning is that if you take the process of classifying theology too far into too many little compartments you will end up by confusing rather than clarifying God's message as incorporated in the Good News conveyed to us in the Bible. In any case how do we define Pacific theology? If we have problems in finding a satisfactory definition of Pacific theology, how much more difficult it would be to have acceptable definitions in terms of its other forms or variants.

I propose to confine myself to the subject of a relevant Pacific Theology, including the role of the Church in the 80s, and leave the educational aspect and the other possible forms of Pacific theology to the other speakers who will be addressing the Consultation after me. In other words I am suggesting that we approach this Consultation in the Pacific Way.

I would like to clarify a few points about subject matter and speaker.

You would be perfectly right if you wondered why a layman should ever want to get himself involved in a consultation on theology. The Church, yes, perhaps, because the layman does go to church, occasionally if not regularly, and certainly when he has a deep personal problem or other crisis connected with his work or profession, when he really needs help. He will most certainly then need the help, the knowledge, the power and authority, of God - that knowledge which "Passeth all Understanding" which we rarely ever experience and have no real perception of because we do not ask often enough, nor seek earnestly enough, nor knock hard enough at the door of unfailing help.

One of the more notable features of Pacific Island life, particularly in the rural areas and outer islands, is the fact that almost everyone belongs to a church or religious organisation of one kind or another. The layman may not be a very active member but he does belong to a church and I doubt if there is another region in the world which surpasses the Pacific Islands in the matter of church membership and attendance. The Pacific region is way ahead of any other region in the world in this respect.

It would be true however to say that church attendance has declined in the bigger cities like Suva, Port Moresby and other major population centres of the Pacific Islands, mainly because of the distractions and other pressures of city life. But they have remained strong at the village level. Those of you who are familiar with life in the villages and outer islands will have little difficulty in agreeing with me in this regard. On any given Sunday more people attend church in the South Pacific Islands as a percentage of total population than anywhere else in the world.

On my last visit to Europe I attended a Sunday morning service in Brussels. Only a handful of people were in that church that Sunday morning - fewer than 200 in a cathedral with seating capacity for over 2,000 people. Two things came to mind; either the Belgians had their priorities wrong so far as their relationship to God was concerned, or there must be something wrong with the church in Brussels.

By contrast, I was in Tonga three weeks ago and had the opportunity to participate in a Sunday morning service. It was only a small church with a capacity for about 300 people, but it was packed. The Tongans very clearly had their priorities right in regard to what they should do on Sundays but there was something that worried me about that service. I was not sure whether that congregation should have gathered where it did. The congregation was a splinter group from an older splinter group of the parent Free Wesleyan Church. I mention this in passing merely to draw attention to the presence of a problem of fragmentation within the church in some parts of the Pacific region, but do not propose to say more on it.

The point I wish to make is that in the context of the Pacific the church is a well-established and familiar institution. The church pervades the total life of the Pacific Islands. It forms part of the environment in which the layman moves and has his being. The layman therefore cannot help but know something about the church; what his role is in relation to it, and what he would like the church to do for him.

So much then on the layman vis-a-vis the church. And now the Layman in relation to theology.

The laymen in the context of theology is a different matter, not completely different of course because there is clearly a linkage between theology and the church. But from the layman's perspective, theology as a discipline, as an area of study about the character of God and man's relation to Him, is something the layman would rather leave to students and teachers of theology. I think the layman would like ministers, pastors and members of the clergy to know something about theology.

Nor does the layman, I think, ordinarily regard it as part of his normal role as a member of the church that he should know something about theology, let alone participate in a discussion or consultation on the subject. The layman recognises that theology lies at the root of the

Christian faith and doctrine, that it is essential to a deeper understanding of God and appreciation of the life and story of Jesus Christ. But the layman does not see a knowledge of theology as a prerequisite to being a good follower of Jesus or a good Christian.

We do not normally need a knowledge of anthropology in order to become good members of our community nor do we need a knowledge of the theory of social organisation or social structure in order to appreciate the value of our customs, our traditions and culture.

We can be good reliable law-abiding citizens and fit in well with the contemporary social fabric without knowing anything about social anthropology. In the same way I believe we can be good Christians, enjoy the many blessings of life and follow closely Jesus Christ without knowing very much at all about theology.

Having said that, let me make it clear that I am not saying that we would be just as well off without any knowledge of anthropology or theology as we would be if we had a smattering of both. No, that is not what I am saying.

What I am saying is that without a knowledge of either we could still get by reasonably well. In other words we would still live. But if we wanted to live "more abundantly" I would suggest very strongly to fellow laymen that we are more likely to reach the "abundance" threshold if we do something about getting a working knowledge of both anthropology and theology.

A word of caution is necessary at this stage. For a layman to speak on theology is like a civil servant trying to tell politicians what politics is all about. It can be likened to a politician holding forth on the economics of exchange rate variations and its effects on international trade and then concluding that the currency ought not to be devalued for political reasons totally unrelated to economics. It is also like asking a geographer to give a historical perspective to a given period in the life and development of a nation and its people without any training in history. In all these situations the speaker is bound to fall short of expectations because the subject matter is outside his particular area of competence.

Why did I accept the invitation then?

Let me say quite candidly that I accepted the invitation to speak with you this morning fully conscious of the fact that I might be out of my depth, and possibly wasting your time. Nevertheless I accepted because my observations as a student, a civil servant, administrator, parliamentarian, Cabinet Minister, regional civil servant, layman, believer in and follower of Jesus Christ - had led me to certain definite conclusions about life. I accepted because my own experience in these different and ongoing phases of my own life has demonstrated very clearly to me one thing among others. It is this. The degree of interdependence in all areas of life, in all its manifestations, is much much greater than we realise.

One of the most sobering and reassuring experiences of life is the discovery that you can always find new ways of solving old problems if you are prepared to look in the most unexpected places and listen to advice from the least likely sources. Put another way, we can with the greatest advantage learn from one another far more than we are prepared to admit.

In the area of Government for example, the civil servant can indeed contribute significantly to the work of the politician. Conversely the politician can enhance his own knowledge and effectiveness in the affairs of the nation if he is prepared from time to time to listen to some of the advice and suggestions offered to him by civil servants. The politician need not accept everything the civil servant tells him. He can be selective. The fact remains that the civil servant is the more permanent of the two, he has greater continuity and as such is likely to know more about the administrative implications of the policy decisions of the politician. Provided the civil servant's advice is not coloured by ulterior motives, he is very well placed to give useful advice, well worth the politician's serious consideration. I would like to think that there is a much closer interaction between pastor and laymen than between politician and civil servant.

Let me go back to Pacific theology.

To assert a Pacific theology is one thing. To define it is another. I imagine that in the available literature on the subject someone must have produced a definition of Pacific theology but I am unaware of it, having not had time to do research myself. I know however that it has been said that very little as yet has been written on Pacific theology. Given these circumstances one of the first tasks of this Consultation, I imagine, would be to try to define what Pacific theology is. Without such a clear definition we are not likely to get very far.

A definition of Pacific theology, to be widely accepted, has to proceed along generally accepted lines of scientific investigation. Normally this would involve making certain assumptions about Pacific theology - what it is and what we are to do with it. However, in the context of the Pacific I would like to suggest to you that in your search for a reliable acceptable definition of Pacific theology you can afford to break with scientific investigation tradition. I mean, why look for assumptions and suppositions when the premises you want are already in hand?

I would like to put forward the view that in the context of the Pacific we already have available to us the Pacific Way, the features and precepts of which are precisely those we would like to see incorporated in a Pacific theology - the tolerance, the respect, the give-and-take attitude, the generosity and the sharing of what we have, and so on.

Last week I was attending a meeting of the Pacific Islands Development Programme at the East-West Center in Honolulu. The meeting coincided with the State Governor's Annual Prayer Breakfast and some of us received invitations to the function. The keynote speaker was a teacher of Divinity who gave a stirring address. The point I remembered most about his speech was where he said that you do not increase your wealth by adding to it. On the contrary you increase your wealth by doing the exact opposite - by dividing it. He illustrated this by reference to the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 people with a mere two loaves and five fishes. Jesus divided the loaves and the fishes. He did not just add to them or multiply them. He could have done that if He wanted to. But He did not. He divided instead.

I have been involved in finance and development most of my working life. I was taught that the way to increase wealth was to invest, save and invest again. You build up your assets, plough back your profits.

in the form of new investments. This way you enlarge your income cycle and multiply your assets at the same time.

I now have a different view. I believe, along with my Divinity teacher friend, that the way to increase wealth, the way to reduce poverty is not through addition or multiplication but through the process of dividing. At first the whole thing seemed highly incongruous to me. But when my friend proceeded to illustrate his argument by reference to the feeding of the 5,000 I no longer had disbelief.

This miracle of Jesus seems to me to point to a possible new approach to the entire process of economic development. Of course, the development process is not as simple as all that. International aid is a very complicated business, fraught with all kinds of political, economic and social pressures of one kind or another. In practical terms it would be disastrous if it were suddenly decreed that all aid of whatever description was to be just divided out without adequate safeguards as to how it was to be applied. No, that would not be very wise.

In my opinion there are important lessons to be learned from the miracle of the five loaves and two fishes. The principle is clearly demonstrated. You increase wealth or abundance by dividing, and we should ask ourselves: is this not perhaps the kind of teaching we would like to see in a Pacific theology? Would it not be exciting if Pacific theology were to teach that the way to abundant living, the way to eradicate poverty, the way to raise incomes and employment, the way to raise living standards was through dividing wealth, not amassing it, not hoarding it, but dividing it, giving it away. Doesn't this match perfectly with the Pacific Way of sharing? Is this not the Pacific Way of generosity? I for one would say so.

Let us just pause for one moment and reflect where Germany would be today were it not for the Marshall Plan. Where would Japan be without the massive injection of capital by America into the Japanese economy to get Japan back on its industrial feet again. The point is that without America dividing its wealth at that point in time the process of recovery would have got off to a very very slow start and the world would have been less well off than it is today.

Finally let me turn to the question of relevancy.

Here I think the layman would like to see the issue looked at from two perspectives. First, from the point of view of timeliness and, secondly from the point of view of the opposite of timeliness - that is, timelessness. I don't think I am contradicting myself.

On the one hand, Pacific theology has to be timely, that is, it has to come to grips and to be able to grapple with the issues of the time - contemporary issues, the issues of today. We are all familiar with the kinds of problems caused through unemployment, the economic problems and social implications of the urban drift, the housing problems, and the necessary adjustments to city life, and so on.

On the other hand, Pacific theology has also to be able to reflect the eternal and unchanging nature of God, the God that is the same yesterday, today and forever. In other words we have to be careful that in the process of creating a Pacific theology we do not end up with a form of theology that is more Pacific than theological. In the final analysis, from the layman's point of view, there can be but one theology because there is only one God.

Notwithstanding this unity or oneness, I believe a Pacific theology is not inconsistent with God's plan for the peoples of the Pacific. I find one of the big attractions of religious experience in Fiji is the presence of so many religious beliefs, which despite their diversity seem to me to all end up recognising a single Supreme Being. It is a big plus if you have the time and inclination.

Philosophers have a term for this kind of situation. I think they call it "an identity in difference". The different religions in Fiji call their Supreme beings by different names. I call mine God. And it is about God that I should like Pacific theology to be all about.

NOTE:

(1) Yes, I believe there is a Pacific Way; there is a distinctive style of thinking which we can call the Pacific Way of thinking. Most importantly, the Pacific Way is capable of being applied to practical situations.

The Pacific Way is a way of looking at things in relation to all the facts and circumstances involved in a given situation. It is a way which takes into account not merely the legal, the political, the social and economic aspects; it takes into account the moral, ethical and spiritual implications and consequences of decisions. By definition, therefore, the concept of justice is built-in to the Pacific Way.

The Pacific Way is concerned that "nobody gets left out", which is another way of saying that the Pacific Way cares about the individual. And if nobody is left out, this means that everybody is in - which is what democracy is all about.

The Pacific Way is not merely a particular way of looking at things, in a passive sort of manner. On the contrary, it concerns itself vitally with the techniques of conducting oneself in discussions, in counsels, in negotiations, and in finding solutions to important national and international issues. Far from being passive, therefore, the Pacific Way is a dynamic force, unobtrusive perhaps, low-keyed and gentle in approach, yet compelling in persuasion, pragmatic and positive in action.

Extract from Opening Address
USP Pacific Week
March 1977.

THE MEANING OF PACIFIC IDENTITY

by Tupuola Efi

I have been trying to pin down what the topic means. In the absence of consultation with the convenors, I have taken liberties which the conference may find excessive. I assume that it is expected that:

1. I know what it is;
2. That I will tell you about it and;
3. How it relates to the Christian message.

The reason for the preamble is that I have reflected on the topic or at least on what I think it means and it has caused me moments of anguish. In the inner recesses of my mind, there is a lingering whisper which I find increasingly difficult to allay: "it is the wrong focus".

What is it that bothers me? Truthfully it is not easy to fathom, for like the proverbial water of Vailima, as soon as you try to take a grip, the water seeps through the fingers. On the other hand I say to myself it is possible that I read it wrongly. It is possible that my drift rather than the topic is out of focus.

The question repeats: What bothers? The word 'identity' implies uniqueness nationally or individually, and the adjective 'Pacific' restricts. How does one square the Christian message with uniqueness rendered more unique by a restrictive adjective?

This is immediately reminiscent of an ethos which has been discredited, and rightly so. For is it not true that preoccupation with race and culture was the moving force behind the CHOSEN PEOPLE concept and all it entails. Christ refutes this, for in saying: Go and teach all nations; he underlines the universality of the Christian message and the common heritage in the spiritual and religious sense, of all men.

Whereas a point can legitimately be made for uniqueness, care must be taken not to overreach; for it is very easy to succumb to the temptation to focus overmuch on our history, our culture, ourselves and very dangerously, our destiny - distinctive and individual. Things begin from where we are: begin by relating the universe to our world.

In Medieval times, the pious fold of Christendom reckoned Jerusalem to be the centre of the world and drew their maps with Jerusalem in the middle. A balanced perspective resists such an egocentric and parochial approach. The world is round and it is whole. There is no north or south, no east or west, but one earth, small and indivisible. Considering therefore the universality of Christ's message and the fact of the earth's indivisibility, dwelling on the "otherness" of man appears misplaced.

Oversensitivity perhaps - nevertheless your attention ought to be drawn to the growing impression amongst concerned laymen that too often we are sidetracked. For instance, that transubstantiation is today a common topic of discussion in ecumenical conferences arouses anxious curiosity.

The controversy originates from the political rivalries of 16th century Europe. Likely the academic protagonists of that era exceeded their briefs (ie. if we assume that the source is ultimately God) as a result of pressure from patrons and partisans - exceeded in the sense that it is difficult even in the most congenial circumstances to conceptualise a spiritual reality. A fact which modern-day theologians, both Catholic and Protestant, readily acknowledge. More interestingly, recognition by Protestant and Catholic theologians of common ground, to a point where the observant bystander is beginning to suspect that the essential point at issue is one of semantics. Yet even if we are to concede that the issue is substantive, notwithstanding, the question begs: What does a controversy which sprang from political rivalries of a bygone age have to do with the real issues?

Ritual: Coming back to preoccupation with uniqueness - which I equate with a penchant for indigenisation - here again there is cause for restraint and caution. There is an unassailable case for indigenisation - and I am all for it, but it should not be indigenisation for its own sake, or indigenisation at the expense of quality and principle.

Let me illustrate by commenting on the recent attempts to indigenise ritual. There is no minding the attempts to indigenise ritual but tinkering must be done with some measure of reverence eg. that the inherited ritual is the repository of a thousand years of accumulated experience. If there must be change or modification, surely we are entitled to an improvement, or at the very least, equal excellence.

Ritual ultimately is theatre conveying a message. Tinkering therefore will have to be assessed by two principal criteria:

1. Is it good theatre?
2. Does it convey the message? Bad, or that which is less than good theatre diminishes the value of ritual.

There are solemn moments in the present Christian ritual (particularly in the Roman Catholic liturgy) and so there should be, because there is a conscious attempt to convey a profound message. To sustain good theatre in a solemn moment constitutes high drama. A bad note or a sloppy performance can be a rude reminder of the old dictum that very little separates the sublime from the ridiculous.

In Samoa the Catholics have taken the initiative in indigenising ritual. In fairness perhaps they deserve kudos for taking the first step. But what modifications there have been to the liturgy of the Mass, for example, the presentation of a pig or fine mats, leis, dancing, would have to be assessed by the accepted standards. Is it good theatre? Does it underline meaning rather than trivialise the message? How does the new ritual tally with the essential message about Christ's life, Christ's crucifixion and the redemption of Man? Bad theatre, or ritual which fails to convey the message, will not be redeemed simply because somebody flaunts the indigenisation banner.

Yet in the final analysis, while reference to indigenisation of ritual is meant to illustrate a point, again we have to be reminded about being sidetracked. Ritual is theatre which is meant to convey the message. Hence, it is the medium not the message. And it is a mistake to confuse style or communication with substance.

Substance: What is substance? The substance of Christianity depends not on the ritual which conveys the message, but on how the message is lived in our daily lives. Rather than emphasis on uniqueness as a people, permit me to shift the focus to applicability of the message to our problems, which to a large extent are conditioned by political institutions and social conditions.

Link between Church Construction and Agriculture: Once upon a time, somehow it seems ages ago, church building and the construction of a pastor's house were inextricably linked with agricultural development. The resources used for construction derived almost exclusively from village agriculture. It was not unusual for church construction to span a time frame of ten years or more. The tufuga (builder) and his party would attend to construction until village resources were exhausted, and then move on, giving the village a breather and time to build up more resources. When these resources were judged sufficient, the tufuga and his party would be recalled to continue work. This was the mode which continued until the project was completed.

Because the project depended almost entirely on village resources, derived from agriculture, church building or any other village construction were the most powerful incentive to maintain plantations and grow more. Significantly, to the extent that each matai (chief) was required to contribute, he was bound to develop and maintain a plantation, ensuring thereby his economic independence. Today, neglect of plantations has resulted in many matai succumbing to the desire for an over-weening influence at the expense of independence, bringing to mind the image of the banyan tree atrophying the growth of smaller plants.

Why the Neglect and Loss of Economic Independence? Religious projects, once built almost exclusively from agricultural resources inside the village, are now to a large extent funded from resources outside the village. The two main sources are:

1. Village people who reside in the village or outside, working for commerce or government.
2. Village people residing and working in New Zealand, American Samoa or the United States.

The link between project and village agriculture is broken, for the requisite support from village agriculture has been reduced until today, at times, it is minimal.

The project, from the village standpoint, was outwardly less expensive in time and money. And yet, paradoxically, it was very much more expensive. The dependence on outside resources undermined the incentive to improve agriculture. This is illustrated by the time committed to construction at the expense of agriculture which was not possible before, because the project thrived or withered depending on the resources from agriculture. Now it is no longer the case. Agriculture and its development is irrelevant for its neglect has no immediate or long-term impact on construction.

It is expensive in agricultural terms, and expensive in straight money terms. The fundraising trips to and from New Zealand or the United States are invariably a five-figure exercise. The main beneficiaries are not the village, certainly not village agriculture,

but travel agents and plane companies, as well as the firms who provide the materials for construction.

Additionally, it is creating a strain on the bonds between the village and its tama fanau (children of the village) in New Zealand or the United States. A common complaint amongst our communities in New Zealand or the United States is the burden placed on them by the insistent claims of the virtually ubiquitous fundraising from Samoa. The social workers in both countries decry the plight of families deprived of essential necessities because of the money-support they feel compelled to give in response to the call from home. Hence the support given is at best reluctant, at worst grudging. If grudging today, what will it be like tomorrow?

Fairly, we have to look at the other side of the coin for the plus or the plusses. Government taking over electrification and water supplies, at one time village or district responsibilities, and the intrusion of the money economy bringing in its wake individualism as opposed to communalism, leave very little chance for the village to function communally save in a religious project eg. building a church or a pastor's house. In socio-political terms it is pertinent to ask: given the challenges confronting the village today, can it survive as a viable unit if it is not bolstered by some communal effort?

New Realities - New Problems: The village unit bears trauma. The dramatic changes compel the fashioning of a mores that can cope with the new conditions. Questions - new and provocative - literally hurl themselves on the equation; conventional wisdom is found wanting. Questions and more questions. What are the legitimate obligations of a taule'ale'a (untitled young man) living virtually a nuclear family existence:

1. to the matai?
2. to the village?
3. to the church?

By what measure can you assess an adequate contribution to the church in the face of demands for faalavelave (traditional involvements), school fees, maintenance of a palagi (European) house and the obligation to pay loans for the purchase of a car and refrigerator? Is there an ethic that applies to proper budgeting? Has the church a moral responsibility to take into account the resources of the parishioners, the adverse effect on agriculture, the plight of the Samoans in New Zealand or the United States when planning a church project? The new realities demand re-appraisal; the old formulas require severe refurbishing. People are looking for guides - why not begin by re-examining reference points?

Eternal Verities: How do you tie the new issues with eternal verities? Has the church a duty to identify the new issues and relate them to the Christian message? If it has, is it performing this duty effectively? Has the church a duty to articulate a vision on how things ought to be, bearing in mind the new realities and the issues they spawn? Is there a Christian ethic that applies to building more churches than required? Is there a moral standard which applies where it is proposed to build a new church when the old one is adequate? Is there a morality that affects building a grand and expensive edifice where a modest and inexpensive building will do?

Granted, schools are essential. Granted, the pastor's or the catechist's residence frequently serves as the village or community hall. Granted, the church or community hall in New Zealand unifies and stabilises. Granted, the communal effort to build a church reinforces the feeling of community, and the rallying of families at umusaga (house opening ceremony) cements family ties. But having conceded all that, are there not, however, circumstances where construction projects exceed what is reasonable? If so, should the church declare a position in clear and unequivocal language? Is it possible that failure to articulate this forthrightly is fraught with ominous implications for the future?

Christianity and the Faa-Samoa (Samoan way of Life): Is it possible that a church project in itself can sometimes be identified wrongly with Christian virtue? Is it possible that appealing to the competitive instinct to motivate large contributions tends to emphasise things material at the expense of things spiritual, orienting Christianity perhaps unwittingly to a materialistic bias? If the point is legitimate, is the church addressing itself to it? On a different tack, yet still on the question of spiritual things, it is important to do the right thing and equally important to do it for the right reason. Construction should relate to a real need rather than "keeping up with the Jones's". People should be discouraged from giving more than they can afford by way of parading a misguided generosity on the lame excuse that it is faa-Samoa. If the practice of faa-Samoa impinges the Christian ethic the church should say so. A clear departure from the Christian norm should not be allowed to pass because of a mistaken allegiance to traditional values.

Conclusion: These are some, not all, of the issues - pertinent and pressing - which confront Christianity in our part of the world. The nature of these issues is shaped by indigenous circumstances. But the relevance of the Christian message to these issues is in no way affected by the peculiarity of the circumstances.

Why? Because in sifting through the circumstances, whatever these are, to identify an issue, it has to be recognised that ultimately the issue is a moral issue, not a Tongan, Fijian or Samoan one. Once identified the issue is then related to a universal message and an eternal verity. And a universal message is not cramped by national boundaries, nor is eternal verity encumbered by time limitations.

The issues represent a challenge to be met and identified problems to be solved. And we take heart from Christ's admonition: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall have their fill." Seeking after righteousness is the essence of the Christian faith. Indeed I make bold to say that this is one of the main purposes of this conference. In pursuit of this objective, I pray that we shall all seek sincerely, and as promised, we shall have our fill.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

Lorine Tevi: What is meant by "being too often side tracked"?

Tupuola Efi: Indigenisation and arguments about ritual are important enough up to a point, but the priority is the message and how it relates to our problems.

Lorine Tevi: If the message is a true message of righteousness and justice and peace, then that is the crucial issue to be wrestled with in the Pacific as we continue to search for a Pacific theology and a Pacific identity.

Tupuola Efi: How we sell the message so that it sounds better to people seems to be the wrong focus. The more important consideration is to take the message into people's lives. There is a fair bit of disenchantment with the church today. If you do not relate the message to the real issue then what has happened in other places may well happen here in our own societies.

Etuale Lealofi: I share your concern that too much emphasis on uniqueness endangers the stress on the universal and the 'eternal verities' as well as your preoccupation about too much haphazard indigenisation without enough consideration of meaning. When Pope John spoke about opening the doors of the Catholic church to the world, he also said in effect that the Christian message is always the same although the way we communicate the message will change. He also said that the way we communicate the message will not necessarily effect the substance of the message. It would therefore seem that for the purposes of the consultation there was no need to go any further, because "owing to the uniqueness of the Pacific identity we are going to lose sight of the universal verities".

Tupuola Efi: Although the indigenous situation does shape our problems, the moral issues that emanate in the situation are the same moral issues that confront any Christian community in any part of the world. It is, for example, easy to condone the behaviour of a traditional chief of the village. But that is wrong.

William Tokilala: The paper seems to suggest that the determining factor of how we live is not 'according to faith', but working through the traditions created by political institutions, social conditions and the economic system. What is really the determining factor of cultural belief today? Is it religious, political or social; or is it the power of the economic system?

Mahe Tupouniua: Lorine Tevi seems to be trying to view the role of the church in terms of its ability to deal with what was the main issue confronting the churches in the Pacific today, while Tupuola Efi seems to be saying that there is not one problem but a number of problems, and that we should deal with these issues confronting the Pacific, and therefore come to something like an understanding of Pacific identity in terms of the church's ability to deal with a series of things, not just one issue.

Elia Taase: The political issue of human rights includes the rights of human beings within the church. If the Church says, "No, you cannot build another church you must stay within this church", is that not breaching the basic human rights of those people?

Tupuola Efi: I am inviting the church people to have a look and ask, "Is this a legitimate issue?" Any good thing can be spoiled by excess. By condoning what is going on, the church is causing very real social and economic problems. Another example from Samoa is the way the relation between the title holder and the untitled is changing very quickly. There is a question of reciprocity of obligations and rights and responsibilities. That relationship has a morality and it is high time that the church particularly should address itself to that morality. If there is a moral issue and the church is silent, then perhaps in those circumstances the people have the right to condemn the church's silence.

Lorine Tevi: Since we are looking from the world perspective we need to note that the different contemporary theologies have come up from different places, for example Liberation theology from Latin America and Minjung theology from Asia. They arise out of the struggle of those people whom the church serves. What is the struggle that the Pacific people are undergoing in order to identify their theology which will finally bring their identity into clarification? What is crucial? Where is the pivoting action of the church? We are holding on to our Pacific way, our faa-Samoa, our traditional ways of doing things, and at the same time we are crying that these traditional ways are not the right way that brings justice and peace and the righteousness of God into our society now. The challenge to the church is probably to look at culture and Christianity because both of them challenge each other. There are other issues such as poverty and urbanisation. Is there one particular issue where all these others come together?

Oka Fauolo: I like the way the speaker has struck a note of caution in regard to ritual and its modernisation. When we move on the road of indigenisation of our rituals the journey has to go very very slowly. On one part the paper suggests that the substance of Christianity depends a lot on the ritual which conveys the message, but this seems to neglect the affirmation in the first part that it is not the ritual but how we live that reflects the Gospel.

Tupuola Efi: Indigenisation does need to be done carefully and it should meet certain standards. I have experienced the quality of some of the Congo and Latin American Masses, but we must not be sidetracked. The most important thing is what has it got to do with morality and what people are facing every day of their lives?

Bishop Bryce: It is important to note the significance of the fact that the two laymen who have spoken in the first sessions were not just intellectuals but people who love their church, and that they spoke because the church means something important to them. We are very grateful for their contribution today.

PACIFIC THEOLOGY

by Rev. Dr. Sione 'Amanaki Havea
(Presented by the Rev. Tevita Havea)

The study of Pacific Theology is an effort to understand theology in the context of the Pacific. Contextualisation is a term that goes beyond indigenisation. Indigenisation refers to cultures, history and customs, that grow out of the local soil. Contextualisation refers to that which grows out of the local soil and also to current sociological, political, and environmental events of the past, present and even of the future.

The term Pacific is limited to its region, but the term theology, in general, refers to a wider range which must be viewed in its global and universal context. We may reflect on the regional soil etc. for our understanding of what is relevant and near, but we must bear in mind that theology, generally, should relate and convey its meaning to benefit each individual in the Community of faith in the global and universal context. Theology therefore must not be compartmentalised exclusively to one region but be seen as a vehicle to convey to the believer the quality and richness in our quest to know God in His hiddenness. Theology is not an end in itself but a process and growth which opens the door of understanding to him who asks, seeks and knocks. (Matthew 7.7).

Pacific Theology is relatively new, but it is an effort to avoid taking Western theology for granted and to avoid its adoption by Pacific Christians as a transplant. Most of the recognized European theologians such as Bonhoeffer, Tillich, Barth and Brunner were victims of War, and their theological perspectives were based on crisis backgrounds. Comparing their perspectives with those of ours in the Pacific, ours are deeply involved in Celebrations.

Leslie Boseto, a Pacific islander, complained that when missionaries came to the mission fields they transplanted Western faith in a theological pod, and instead of taking out the "plant" and placing it in the local soil, they kept it in the pod and nurtured it with a Western environment and climate. This Christianity has been seen and taken as a foreign religion.

Pacific Theology is an effort to put faith and the Gospel in the local soil and in the local context so that it can exist in a local climate.

Theology is a gift of God. It is God's revelation to history and culture, therefore it is an effort to interpret and see with Pacific eyes, and listen with Pacific ears; and, instead of it being foreign, it should become local and indigenised and contextualised.

For more than 150 years now, the Pacific has been a mission field. The Western boards of missions were the sending churches, and the "ends of the earth" were the receiving churches. The missionary trends have changed completely, and during the last two decades there have grown many independent nations and autonomous churches. Today we look to our conferences and Church Assemblies as to what theology our conferences and Church Assemblies regard as our own. If Christianity has now been introduced into the Pacific, and missionaries are now no longer the major personnel in our churches, should they go and take with them what they introduced as the foreign Good News, or should it be known as existing Good News?

My suggestion is that it should be local. The Good News was effective simultaneously to us when it happened in time and history. When Christ was born in Bethlehem and was crucified at Calvary, and when the Holy Spirit descended on the first day-of-Pentecost in Jerusalem, the effectiveness was immediate and simultaneous to every part and every people of the world. This Good News was already present before missionaries came to the Pacific. In other words, they did not have to bring these historical events in their suit cases! They only came to make known to us the Good News that was already here before they came!

Here is an illustration - Out at the mouth of the river Mississippi, the force of the river goes for many miles into the Ocean. There was a sailing boat which was drifting near the land because there was no wind. After a few days they ran out of drinking water. They were panicking and desperate for water. Finally they saw a boat coming towards them; they signalled that they needed drinking water. The other boat signalled back telling them to drop a bucket into the sea; it was fresh water! They did and were saved from thirst. The Good News is Universal and timeless and its effectiveness is immediate and simultaneous.

In contextualising theology we look to our history, culture and customs to illustrate in the light of the Good News, what God is like and is doing to us in his saving acts of revelation and salvation.

Let me relate the above to some thoughts which may illustrate what we mean -

As stated above, there are elements which are regional but their theology is universal. Christ was born a Jew, and he grew up in a Hebrew context. He illustrated in his parables many things which were regional and limited to his culture and environment, and yet the meanings and theological interpretation were universal and their catholicity can be proved relevant to the whole ecumenical community.

He taught and illustrated that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed. He knew about the animals of Palestine like the sheep and the goats. He talked about the vineyards, the farmers, the housewives who hid leaven in the dough when making bread. He knew his Jewish history of liberation. He detected places where shoals of fish could come to find their food. He used metaphors like the good shepherd, and the secrets of life and he even talked about the best kind of yoke that farmers should use for ploughing. He used his environment to contextualise the ecumenicity and catholicity of theology. He lived and appreciated his Hebrew world as it was meant to be suitable for the existence of total man in his right relationship with his God, not a Jewish (regional) God but the one God (universal).

If Jesus had grown up in a Pacific context he would have related his teaching to what we have in the Pacific - the coconut, the kava (Yaqona), the betel nut, the hibiscus, the orchids and the yams, taro and the Pacific delicacies like the palusami, and the celebrations of birth, marriage and death. These are limited to regional contexts but the applied theology is universal and ecumenical.

Our Pacific Theology could be a Theology of Celebration. The cooperation of the community, the inclusiveness of the extended family, the sharing and caring for the old folks were present with

the Pacific peoples even before Western individualism touched our shores.

Matters concerning births, marriages and deaths in any Pacific Community called for feasting and celebration. Every Maori tiki is symbolised by the three fingers that represent their solidarity and unity.

Take, for instance, the Pacific celebrations of one event of what the three fingers symbolise. If there is to be a marriage or death in the community, the host family starts off by bringing firewood and digging the ground for an 'umu (lovo). There may be one or two pigs to start with. Before long the neighbourhood and relatives arrive on the spot with whatever they can afford to donate or offer for the occasion. Then by the time the oven is ready to be covered, there is enough food for a feast and for feeding of the whole community.

Now to apply it to theology: God in his celebration of giving (the eucharist) took the first move by giving his only son. The people come with gifts of money, food, flowers, which add up to a God/Community celebration. He took the first move, he initiated, and the people were fed in praise and thanksgiving.

The legendary origin of the Kava in the Tongan context, was a plant that grew up over an 'Umu (oven) in which the parents in their poverty had only a leper daughter to offer to the visiting royalty in their island. They killed their one and only daughter and prepared for a presentation to the king. The king knew what had happened and especially about the daughter being a leper so he instructed the couple not to disturb their 'umu (oven) because it had become a sacrifice, but to report if a plant grew out of it. After some time, two plants grew out of it, one was sugar cane, and the other a shrub. They took both plants and reported back to the King. The kava was crushed and mixed with water, and that constituted the Kava Ceremony. It is a memorial of an act of sacrificial love and loyalty to the king. The Kava Ceremony today is used to welcome and farewell people. It is used to seal an agreement for marriages, to symbolise forgiveness between quarrels. The legend is regional but the catholicity of the theology symbolised the death and resurrection events of the Cross.

One of my friends, Albert to Burua, Moderator of the United Church of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, gave me an interesting interpretation of Betel Nut Theology. I shall leave it to him to develop.

The Coconut Theology is another Theology that can be identified in the Pacific. Everyone in the Pacific knows and literally lives on coconut. It is a tree of many uses, and a tree of life for Pacific Islanders. If Jesus had grown up and lived in the Pacific, he would have added another identification of himself - I am the Coconut of Life.

The tree itself has many potentialities - a drink, food, house, shelter, fuel, mats, etc. Once it bears fruit it continues to bear fruit every year. The fruit is round and, like water, it has a tendency to roll down to the lowest possible level. When the Coconut rolls down it rolls down with its many possibilities to make a life and a living. It rolls down with food, drink, husks, shells, money and industry. Sometimes it falls into the ocean and floats away to another island, in that way taking

food etc. to the people there. The Coconut floats as long as there is life in it. It has a protective shell and a soft kernel. It has eyes and mouth and features like that of a human head. When one drinks from it one draws nourishment by "kissing" it. In the Coconut there are so many biblical concepts. The fullness of time (kairos) is there. No one can push the time back when it will ripen, nor make it ripen any earlier; only at the fullness of time will it fall.

Many people talk about Fijian Time or Tongan Time when they are late, but the best suggestion is to call it the Coconut time, for it does not matter whether one is early or late. The important thing is whether the task is done or the mission fulfilled.

The full Christology can be seen in the Coconut. The Incarnation and the Virgin Birth is in the Coconut. The full potential of new life is in the coconut and when it is ready (fullness of time) the new life breaks through in sprouts and becomes rooted in the soil; it grows towards heaven. The glimpses of death and resurrection are there, "a seed must die in order to live". At the final end, the world-forces forced Him to the earth's womb, intending to keep Him there with the Roman Seal (power), and to say the end had come. Instead of the end which they expected to come, the shell cracked and resurrection took place. A new full-grown coconut came to its own.

One Spirit could be illustrated by what we use in building houses. The whole structure is tied up with the sinnet. We may use artistic designs, but the fact is that they are held together by only one string. The churches are held by the only one string, the Holy Spirit.

When we think of the Eucharist, the coconut is more relevant than the bread and wine. In the Hebrew context the pilgrims had to use the unleavened bread and wine because they were the easiest elements to make, and were within their means to use. Bread and Wine to the Pacific peoples are foreign, and very expensive to import. The wheat and the grapes are two separate elements. The Coconut has both the drink and food from the same fruit, like the blood and flesh from the one and same body of Christ. I am convinced that if Christ had grown up and lived in the Pacific, he would have used the Coconut to represent the body which was bruised and crushed, and the juice for the blood as elements of the Holy Eucharist.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

Itubwa Amram: According to medical advice, diabetes is rampant in the Pacific today, and coconut is very bad for diabetics. Does Dr Havea still want us to do 'coconut theology'? Not only that, but Nauru is running out of coconut trees, and nowadays we eat imported foods!

Ming-Ya Teng Tu'uholoaki: Of course we all recognise the importance of coconut and kava in the Pacific, but we need to find out what the specific content of a 'coconut' or 'kava' theology might be.

Elia Taase: Dr Havea's paper presents the task that is ahead of us, and now we must go on to identify the content of a 'coconut theology' or whatever it might be called. For years we have been talking about 'Pacific Theology' and defending our right to have it. Now we have Dr Havea's paper, which I see as one of several possible approaches to doing Pacific theology. His approach seems to be to take the basic Biblical concepts (of salvation and so forth) and to try to re-explain them by integrating them into our Pacific ideas. Is this the approach we should adopt? Another approach is the one being tried in South Africa: beginning with the grass-roots situation and building up from there to apply it to the Bible.

Tevita Havea: Christianity has been viewed in the Pacific as a foreign religion, and removing the foreignness of Christianity is the task of Pacific theology. But it must still be a Christian theology, and a universal one. It must be applicable to our situation, but not limited to the Pacific.

Etuale Lealofi: I appreciate very much what Dr Havea is trying to do, but deep down I have an uneasy feeling. We cannot avoid the fact that our Christian theology is rooted in a specific historical context. It is all very well to say 'If Christ had been born in the Pacific he would have done so and so'. The fact is, he was not. He was born into a certain culture at a certain time in history. The bread and wine belong to that tradition, and we cannot do away with this part of our heritage. The coconut is a beautiful illustration, but we cannot really use it as a substitute.

Chris Walker: We can make a comparison with liberation theology and its method. What they have done in Latin America is this: they have looked at the context and decided that it calls for an emphasis on liberation. They have then looked at the Bible and found themes relevant to that. In the same way the need in the Pacific is to find what touches the heart of Pacific life, and then find the Biblical themes relevant to that. Dr Havea has spoken of a 'Theology of Celebration': we should pick this up and take it further.

Sevati Twere: The task of theology is always to interpret the faith in the light of the realities of the particular situation we are in. 'Coconut theology' is a serious attempt to find a common language we can all speak. We are small and separated island states, and right now it is very important for us to speak that common language. We are becoming the subject of attention from the world powers. Our churches must address themselves seriously to concrete realities in the Pacific today.

Tupuola Efi: Speaking not as a theologian but as a concerned layman, I am deeply moved by the aim and approach of this paper. We need liberation, not just from language and ritual, but also from injustice and an unloving system. If we are talking about the liberation of people, we need to be specific: who should be liberated and why, and how?

Oka Fauolo: Dr Havea is not wanting us to 'over-coconut' Christian theology, but just to 'coconut' it enough. We need not rush anxiously to re-write the New Testament and Christian theology, or create a new theology. God has not been westernised to such an extent that Pacific Islanders cannot say 'O God our Father'. What we should be doing is to follow 'Amanaki's example by localising the presentation, making it more meaningful in our Pacific setting.

Lorine Tevi: The calling of the Church today is to help the people see how God is incarnating himself into the Pacific situation. Dr Havea wants to help us find a language that expresses God's message better. Our task in theological education is to ground our people in the faith and help them think theologically when they come out of the worship service into their daily existence. This task can be seen in two ways: firstly we can affirm the richness of Pacific life, its symbols and values as pointers to God's values; secondly we need to see from the people's viewpoint: the people will do their own theology in order to see God's salvation in their real situation of pain and hurt today. Our task this week is to identify these situations and enable the church to do this theology. The role of the theologians is to help us with the tools for analysing and systematising.

Taihia Hasini: We must be careful not to rush into foreign and irrelevant ways of doing theology. We should remember that we already have 'coconut theology': in our weekly preaching we apply the word of God to the real situation of our people in our islands: this is the starting point for formulating 'Pacific theology'. In fact it is coconut theology.

Toa Finau: Speaking as a pastoral theologian I commend this paper as a step forward in the formulation of a relevant theology for the Pacific. A sound theology can arise only after the sunset of the pastoral encounter. The symbols spring from the community of the poor.

Helmut Horndasch: It concerns me that Dr Havea believes that 'the Good News was already present before missionaries came to the Pacific'. How can we have a Christian theology without the historical events that the missionaries 'brought in their suitcases'?

Puafitu Faaalo: We must be grateful to Dr Havea for producing the first chapter of Pacific Theology. But we must also be aware of his reminder that Christian theology has universal and global implications.

Russell Chandran: I am impressed by this paper. There is a very striking concept here: the theology of celebration. It would be good to develop this further, not just for the Pacific but also as a contribution to world theology. The symbols mentioned (kava

and the coconut) are very important too, and these could well be worked out more too, to bring out the Pacific reality behind them. We should not be afraid to bring out the negative as well as the positive elements in this symbolism, just as the harmful attributes of wine do not prevent us from continuing to use wine as a Christian symbol.

Samuel Akle: What you are doing here and what we are doing in Africa is extremely important. Theology is not an institution but an ongoing thinking process. In particular, the Pacific and the world can learn from what has been said today about the symbolism of the coconut. The Pacific use of the coconut in Holy Communion can bring something new to the world. Dr Havea is encouraging us all to go deeper into this.

GROUP REPORTS

GROUP I:

1. The Pacific Context: What is meant here is specifically a South Pacific theological understanding of the Gospel in the 150 to 200 years of Christian presence and influence in the Islands.
2. Jesus as Theologian: How did Jesus theologise? He spoke for the silent majority of his day. Where did he get his theology from? His stories were attractively simple but this simplicity was the fruit of profound experience. It is only at the level of the most profound experience of South Pacific people that a South Pacific theology will be found.
3. Contextual Theology: The Gospel is for the world and belongs to us equally, wherever we live and whatever our culture and context. But wherever it comes and is accepted it penetrates to the depths. It is universal and local, general and particular, catholic and protestant, and all at the one time. When we search for a Pacific theology and attempt to articulate it, we are looking for a specifically South Pacific way of understanding the one message of salvation which God has proclaimed to the whole wide world.
4. Foreign Theology: The Gospel of Jesus was proclaimed to the South Pacific first by western missionaries. So it came in a foreign package. But most of the South Pacific missionaries since 1797 have been Islanders. Wherever they took the Gospel, it also came as a foreign message. Foreignness needs to be analysed.
5. Indigenising Theology: When we talk about 'indigenising' and 'contextualising' the gospel, we do not mean domesticating it. We mean localising it, making it the vehicle of response to God, bringing to God the offering of all that we are. A South Pacific theology must possess the characteristics of both givenness and response, transcendence and immanence.
6. Celebration: One answer is celebration. The South Pacific celebrates the coming of the Gospel. It celebrates the discovery of the Christ, in the midst of all time, but unknown, unrecognised, and unloved. The Eucharist means thanksgiving at the level of the soul. Here is where the South Pacific instinct and genius for celebration must find its deepest means of expression. Why not expand the Eucharist with an Agape and make it such a celebration? Into the Agape can be poured the gifts of nature, the produce of the land (symbolised by the coconut) and produce of the sea (symbolised by the fish). At the centre of the celebration is the gift of history, the broken body and shed blood of the historical Jesus.
7. Scripture and Localisation: The Bible comes to us as a fixed canon which is a gift of history, fixed and final. At the same time we respond to scripture by working with it and relating it to the needs of life. What happened 'there and then' comes thus to happen 'here and now'.

8. A Dialectical Process: The naturalising or localising of the one unchanging Gospel is a long-drawn-out process of dialectical exchange between what came and what was already here. Christianity will continue to seem foreign as long as it covers only the surface of life.

GROUP II:

1. Symbol and Concept: In developing a Pacific Theology we must distinguish between symbol (eg. coconut, kava) and concept. We can have a 'theology of the coconut', but not a 'coconut theology', as coconut is a symbol not a concept. More promising as a focus for Pacific theology is the central Pacific concept of celebration. This and other concepts and symbols need much more elaboration: we have only begun.

2. The Pacific Identity: Before we can get very far in developing a Pacific theology we need to become specific about this. Such things as community, and sharing, and celebration, are important in the Pacific. Of course there are important differences between the various Pacific societies and cultures, and we should be careful not to obscure them by talking too easily of a single 'Pacific identity'.

3. Theology of the People: It is important that a Pacific theology arises from the people's living faith, faith lived in real situations, not from the unreal ponderings of armchair theologians. It is significant that the first two speakers today were Christian laymen. But this should not be a surprise to them (both said "I am not a theologian") or to us: it needs to be emphasised that theology is the task of the church, and the people are the church.

4. Theology and History: We must be careful not to move away from the Gospel's roots in history. But at the same time our theology should not be imprisoned in the present: the present is not perfect, and our living theology must have a vision of the future.

GROUP III:

1. Theology and History: "The Good News was already present when the missionaries came to the Pacific". On the one hand the message the missionaries brought illumined what was already present. On the other hand we would not have known what was already present if the missionaries had not brought the actual story of the saving events of the Christian story. In developing a Pacific theology every effort should therefore be made to incorporate into it and combine with it the full Christian heritage, the saving Christian events. The question asked by Dr Horndasch should be faced up to: is it possible to formulate a Christian theology without taking into account the historical events of the bringing of the good news?

2. Traditional and Modern Symbols: Why is it necessary for us to turn back to coconut theology, when we are already using so much of modern technology? Should Pacific theology turn back to the life and traditions of Pacific people of the past for its central symbols, or should it take more seriously the symbols of the present and the future?

3. Coconut Symbolism: In developing the coconut as a symbol of Pacific theology its power as a symbol should be related to all aspects of Pacific living. This includes its more obvious uses in the domestic and village situations. But since, like all gifts it can be abused as well as used, the connection of the coconut with the coconut industry should also be recognised. Possible abuses, such as depressed copra prices and the manipulation of big business and multinational companies relates the coconut to sources of oppression. The question of the coconut as a theological symbol needs to be teased out a lot more.

4. Kava Symbolism: Kava is another possible symbol. It is not however a universal Pacific drink and differs in its significance from country to country where it is used. In Fiji it separates men from women, often putting women in the position of waiting around till late to serve food to the kava drinkers or for them to return home.

5. Theology and Justice: Pacific theology is not just a reflection on Pacific culture and cultural symbols. It also arises in the struggle for identity and justice.

GROUP IV:

1. Pacific Identity: This concept needs further clarification and definition, beyond what was done in the papers.

2. Pacific Theology: There is a Pacific theology which is meaningful and real. This consultation must work hard at specifying its content. We must go back and hear the cries of our people, out of which this theology must come. This theology must be a response to God in faith, growing out of our Pacific situation. We do not claim it as universal, but specific - in contrast to European theology and Christianity. There is a question of whether there can be a Pacific theology common to all the Pacific islands and cultures, but what unifies us here and in the task of developing this theology is the gospel of Jesus Christ and the shared task of challenging others to accept him. The coconut is an appropriate symbol for Pacific theology.

3. Relevance to Current Issues: Pacific theology must be relevant to current issues faced by our people, such as unemployment, nuclear testing, and the struggle for independence and liberation of the New Caledonian people. If our theology relies too much on the traditions of the church, or the traditions of our cultures, we run the risk of alienating our young people.

4. Missionaries and Foreignness: God was here before the missionaries came, but our people were not aware of this until the missionaries came and revealed the good news to us. Christianity

was brought by the foreigners and therefore has an element of foreignness in it. But our Pacific people have adopted other foreign material and methods as well.

5. Indigenisation of Worship: Worship must continue to enable our people to experience the sovereign holiness of God, a sense of our own weakness, the way to God, and the challenge to service. Worship must be meaningful to people and prepare them for their mission.

6. Celebration: Meaningful celebration must gear our common struggle together. The pain of preparation must precede the moment of celebration.

7. Laity and Theology: It is significant that two of today's three presenters were laypersons. It is important that the laity be equipped with the confidence and ability to think theologically about their life experience.

ASIAN PERSPECTIVES FOR DOING THEOLOGY

by J Russell Chandran

Let me begin with a word of profound gratitude to the members of the Planning Committee of this Consultation for inviting me to present a paper. Standing before an assembly of Church leaders and theological educators from the South Pacific region I am reminded of the introductory words of an ecumenical visitor from Britain speaking in Bangalore. He spoke of how people report on visits to other countries. After a short visit of about two weeks one would write a book. If the visit is for a few months he would write an article. If the visit is longer the impressions would become too profound and perhaps also confused for words and therefore he would keep silent. I have been here for a little over a year and my experiences have been most enriching for me. I had the privilege of visiting several of the Island countries of the South Pacific as a member of the Visitation Team and learning something about the different Island peoples and their cultures. Through the students and staff at PTC I am continuing to learn. In fact one reason for my accepting the invitation to come to PTC was my ignorance of this region and the possibility of filling that gap in my knowledge. I am most grateful for the warmth of friendship, hospitality and appreciation with which you have received me into your fellowship. The concern for the South Pacific identity and for a Pacific Theology have greatly impressed me and I have been looking forward to this consultation with expectations of learning more and the enlarging and sharpening of my theological perceptions. I want to keep silent and listen to you rather than to ask you to listen to me.

However, I accepted the invitation to present a paper because it was not on Pacific Theology but on Asian Perspectives for doing theology. This, of course, raised the question, What has a consultation on Pacific theology to do with Asian theology? Has it anything to do with Asia-Pacific solidarity? It is not for me to say whether my presentation of the Asian perspectives has anything to contribute to the discussions on Pacific Theology. You will have to decide. I believe, however, that no theology is done in complete isolation from other theologies and that our theologies are greatly enriched by what we can learn from how theology was done by past generations as well as by people in other parts of the world. It is also good to bear in mind that theology, if it is to be authentic, should be genuinely indigenous and contextual as well as global or "planetary", to use the title of a recent book by the Sri Lankan theologian Tissa Balasuraya. A mutual interaction and stimulation between theologies in Asia and the Pacific is possible and may also be desirable. In presenting the Asian perspectives, therefore, I shall indicate some questions which you might consider worth pursuing in relation to your concern to promote theologies relevant for the Pacific people.

1. Critical Asian Principle

One of the basic convictions underlying the development of Asian perspectives for doing theology is that there is no perennial

theology, no theology valid for all time and for all places. Every theology is conditioned and shaped by the time, the place, and the socio-political and cultural realities forming the context for its formulation. By theology we mean the human activity giving expression to the systematic articulation or reflection of the faith-response to the once-for-all saving event in Christ. There is an unchangeable, "faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"⁽¹⁾, a God-given faith for receiving the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is universal. This faith and the verbalising of it are not the same. It is important to recognise their distinctiveness and mutual relationship. From the very beginning there were differences in the verbal expressions depending on the contexts. Apart from the different theological approaches in the Old Testament, we have in the New Testament also different distinctive theological emphases in the Synoptic, Johannine, Pauline and other interpretations of the Gospel. Theology is a human response, but a necessary response for understanding, interpreting and communicating the Gospel in order that we may grow from faith to faith and that we may enable others also to believe and grow in maturity of faith.

The question of what exactly was the once-for-all delivered faith is also a continuing concern of the theological task. There is no universally accepted formulation of this faith. Attempts to deal with the problem by distinguishing between the Kerygma and the didache or between dogma and doctrine have not been successful. They have only raised fresh questions directing us to identify the nature of the saving event of Jesus Christ and to recognise what constitutes the good news dimension of the Gospel.

A concern for independent responsible theological reflection in Asia developed out of a situation which might be described as theological colonialism, when churches were dependent on inherited models of theology developed in Europe and America in different situations. The curricula for theological education in different Asian Theological Colleges were also modelled after curricula developed in the West. But similar to the political awakening of the Asian nations against colonialism there has been a theological awakening also against the uncritical continuance of inherited models of theology and theological education. A voice of protest against imported models had been raised many years ago by a well known Christian in India, Sadhu Sundar Singh when he said, "Indians greatly need the water of life, but they do not want it in European vessels"⁽²⁾. During the past two or three decades however, there have been more vigorous efforts for the recognition of Asian theological reflection and for the development of more relevant curricula for theological education.

What is called the Critical Asian Principle is the result of an attempt by the South East Asia Graduate School of Theology in 1972 to provide a dynamic guideline for theological education under its auspices. The principle is based on what the former Director of the Theological Education Fund of the WCC, Dr Shoki Coe, used to speak of as the dialectical relationship between the text and the context and also what came to be described as Theology in Context. Dr Emerito Nacpil, the then dean of the South East Asia Graduate School described the principle as seeking, "to identify what is distinctively Asian and to use this distinctiveness as a critical principle of judgment on matters dealing with

the life and mission of the Christian Community, theology and theological education in Asia"(3). Seven points have been indicated as constituting the diversity and commonality in the Asian reality. These include the plurality and diversity of the Asian races, religions, ideologies, cultures and social institutions, the colonial experience, the process of nation building and modernisation through the use of science and technology, the concern to achieve authentic self-identity and cultural integrity, and the search for a socio-political order which would enable them as well as the rest of the world to live together in dignity in a planetary world.(4)

One of the insights underlying the Critical Asian Principle is that none of the imported models of theology, whether they be Thomistic, Lutheran, Calvinistic, Barthian or any other has any normative character. Asian Churches are free to determine their own norms. As a result of the growing discovery of one another in the ecumenical fellowship and also through reflection on the contextual character of all theologies and doctrinal formulations this insight is now shared by many Western theologians also. Richard D N Dickinson in his book, Poor Yet Making Many Rich, has pointed out that "Increasingly, ecumenical literature manifests a conscious and serious questioning of the normative character of Western culture, Western institutions and Western interpretations of the Christian faith"(5).

Is it possible to speak of a Critical Pacific Principle?

2. Living Theology

Even prior to the formulation of the Critical Asian Principle the quest for the identity and integrity of Asian Christian theologies led to the development of the Criteria of Living Theology. It was a consultation organised by the East Asia Christian Conference [now Christian Conference of Asia - CCA] at Kandy, Sri Lanka, in 1965, which called for the development of a Living Theology. The statement issued by the Consultation of "The Confessing Church and its Theological Task" said, "A Living Theology is born out of the meeting of the living Church and its World..... The Asian Churches so far, and in large measure, have not taken their theological task seriously enough, for they have been largely content to accept the ready-made answers of Western theology or confessions. We believe, however, that today we can look for the development of authentic living theology in Asia..." A living theology "must speak to the actual questions men in Asia are asking in the midst of their dilemmas, their hopes, aspirations and achievements, their doubts, despair, and suffering. It must also speak in relation to the answers that are being given by Asian religions and philosophies, both in their classical forms and in new forms created by the impact on them of Western thought, secularism and science. Christian theology will fulfil its task in Asia only as the Asian Churches as servants of God's Word and revelation in Jesus Christ, speak to the Asian situation and from involvement in it. Dogmatic theological statements from a Church that stands on the sidelines as spectator, or even as interpreter, of what God is doing in Asia can carry no conviction....."(6)

This expression of a concern for a living theology in Asia had a tremendous impact on theological reflection and stimulated a great deal of creative thinking by Asian Christians.

Does the concept of a living theology have relevance for the Pacific Churches? Would it be an adequate response to the kind of caution which I have heard the PTC Principal, Sevati Tuwere, repeatedly express against the development of patterns of academic excellence in theological education not related to the peoples and the Churches in the Pacific, their fears, hopes and groanings?

3. The Liberation role of Theology

The liberation theme which today is often associated with the Latin American Liberation theology is not new in Asia. In the ancient religions of Asia, particularly in Hinduism and Buddhism, the religious quest was a quest for liberation. The Hindu word *moksha* literally meant liberation. The Christian Gospel, however, raised questions about the nature of the bondage from which God leads his people to liberation. The concern to interpret the Gospel of salvation from Sin in all its dimensions had raised questions about the manner in which human bondage was to be understood. In several situations in different parts of Asia the interpretation of the Gospel of salvation had recognised that unjust socio-cultural structures which kept people in dehumanised conditions had to be challenged. But on the whole, in the Asian religions as well as in Christianity, the liberation motif was kept as a spiritualised, internalised and other worldly quest. With the impact of the modern ecumenical awakening, Asian theology has developed a fresh impetus to widen and deepen the experience of the Gospel through a more profound understanding of the reality of the demonic forces of enslavement and oppression. In this process the insights from the Latin American Liberation theology have certainly made a contribution.

The liberation trends in Asian theology were articulated at a number of recent conferences. The two conferences held under the auspices of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT), the first held at Colombo in January 1979 and the second held at Hong Kong in July-August 1984, made a significant contribution to the sharpening of the understanding of the role of theology in Asia. Several other conferences also, such as the All-Asia Consultation on Theological Education held in Manila in 1977, the Theological Seminar Workshop held under the auspices of the South East Asia Graduate School of Theology in 1983 and the Seminar on Living Theology in India, held at Pune in 1984, have highlighted the role of theology as a servant of the liberating power of the Gospel.

The process of grasping the liberating role of theology has raised four basic questions.

- i. How do we understand the Asian reality to which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is addressed?
- ii. What is the appropriate methodology for doing theology?
- iii. How does the Church fulfil its mission?
- iv. Who are the theologians, the subjects of theology?

i. Sabba Dhukha, "all is sorrow, pain or suffering", was how the founder of Buddhism had discerned reality. This has continued to be a true image of the Asian reality. But in recent Asian theological discussions there has been a greater awareness, through historical and socio-political analyses, of the different dimensions of the Asian reality. This is particularly true of the conferences sponsored by EATWOT. The 1979 Conference in Colombo had the theme, "Asia's struggle for Full Humanity", and the deliberations of this conference were based on the discernment that the suffering of the Asian people was not a God-given reality but an evil to be struggled against and overcome. The final statement issued by the Colombo Conference described the Asian reality as follows: "Asia suffers under the heels of a forced poverty. Its life has been truncated by centuries of Colonialism and a more recent neo-colonialism. Its cultures are marginalised, its social relations distorted. The cities, with their miserable slums swollen with the poor peasants driven off the land, constitute a picture of wanton affluence side by side with abject poverty that is common to the majority of Asia's countries.... A small minority of owners dictates the quality of life for the producers, workers, peasants and others.

..... The Asian context which dictates the terms of an Asian Theology consists of a struggle for fuller humanity in socio-political as well as psycho-spiritual aspects. The liberation of all human beings is both societal and personal"(7). The second Asian conference of EATWOT also took time to analyse and describe the Asian reality in terms of the struggles of the people against different forms of oppressive structures. It affirmed "our people - hundreds of millions of poor, deprived and oppressed - live their lives in a historically created situation not of their own making"(8).

Equally important for the understanding of the Asian reality is the plurality of great religions by which the majority of the people live. The Colombo Conference recognised that, "To be authentically Asian, theology must be immersed in our historico-cultural situation and grow out of it. A theology that emerged from the people's struggle for liberation would spontaneously formulate itself in religio-cultural idioms of the people." At the same time the Conference also warned against the domesticating role of religions supporting the unjust structures and said, "In this context, we question the academic preoccupation to work toward the so-called 'indigenisation' or 'inculturation' of theology divorced from participation in the liberational struggle in history..... Involvement in the history and theology is both liberating and indigenous"(9).

ii. With regard to Methodology, Asian theology is increasingly influenced by the praxis oriented theology of EATWOT. It is based on the shift from a deductive epistemology to the inductive, even while recognising the dialectical relationship between the two. It is not particularly unique even for Third World Theology. It is more widely recognised action-reflection dialectic for doing theology. But for the liberation of theology from the imported or inherited models, and for making theology authentic, this shift in theological methodology is important for Asia as well as for other Third World situations.

The main point of this shift is the Johannine insight that believing, knowing and doing of the Truth belong together. Theology follows action or obedience and not the other way around. Accordingly, the Colombo Conference affirmed, "The first act of theology, its very heart, is commitment. This commitment is a response to the challenge of the poor in their struggle for full humanity"(10) This is further elaborated in the report of the next conference held at Hong Kong - as follows: "In our methodology, commitment which entails ongoing involvement with the people's struggle is the starting point of theological reflection. In the context of the socio-economic, religio-cultural reality the dialectical dynamics between faith heritage and historical context takes place. Faith heritage impels the search for the foot prints of the liberating action of the Lord of History. Who Jesus Christ is for a particular community cannot be settled in a neutral way. The question can only be answered from within a commitment"(11).

iii. One of the important ecclesiological insights is that the Church is where Jesus Christ is. Christ is where the poor and the oppressed are. It is this insight which led to the Latin American Bishops' Conference making an affirmation about "the Church's option for the poor." Asian Theology also is characterised by the discernment of the presence of Christ with the people struggling for a better life against the forces of injustice and oppression. The Sixth Assembly of the Christian Conference of Asia held in 1978 had the theme "Jesus Christ in Asian Suffering and Hope." The last Assembly held in Bangalore in 1982 had the theme "Living with Christ in Asia". One of the main thrusts of both these Assemblies was that the Asian Churches were faithful to their calling only in so far as they listen to the cry of the people in their struggle and listen to the good news of God in the context of the people's cry.

Reflecting on the Biblical perspective the Colombo Conference said, "We believe that God and Christ continue to be present in the struggles of the people to achieve full humanity as we look forward in hope to the consummation of all things when God will be all in all..... When theology is liberated from its present race, class and sex prejudices, it can place itself at the service of the people and become a powerful motivating force for the mobilisation of believers in Jesus to participate in Asia's ongoing struggle for self-identity and human dignity"(12). The Hong Kong Conference also reaffirmed this insight about the calling of the Church and said, "On the whole, the institutional Church is too much vested in power, too rigidly structured, too distant from the people and too silent. To be a prophet for the people the Churches must be in solidarity with them, become participants in their struggles and join hands with prophets beyond ecclesial boundaries. Only Churches rooted in the people and which live their faith and hope and struggles can be genuine signs of God's Kingdom"(13).

iv. The Subject of Theology. As in several other contexts Asian theology also has raised the question, who are the theologians? Who are the people doing theology? From the beginning EATWOT had included among theologians not only professional academic theologians involved in theological teaching or scholarship but also those belonging to a number of other categories of response to the Gospel such as pastors, social workers, political activists, journalists, etc. At the Colombo Conference the question was explicitly raised

pressing for a clear formulation of who the real theologians are. Particularly those who came from the Philippines with their background of active involvement with the people in their struggle against the oppressive regime, were reluctant to recognise academic theologians as genuine theologians. There was consensus that authentic theology is what happens through reflection on faith experience in the struggle against oppression and evil forces. "To be truly liberating, this theology must arise from the Asian poor with a liberated consciousness. It is articulated and expressed by the oppressed community using the technical skills of biblical scholars, social scientists, psychologists, anthropologists and others.....

A truly liberating theology must ultimately be the work of the Asian poor, who are struggling for full humanity. It is they who must reflect on and say what their faith-life experience in the struggle for liberation is. This does not exclude the so-called specialists in theology. With their knowledge they can complement the theologising of the grassroot people. But their theologising becomes authentic only when rooted in the history and struggle of the poor and the oppressed⁽¹⁴⁾."

The underlying affirmation is that theology is not produced by Theological Colleges or academic theological specialists for the consumption of the people. Theology is produced by the people. Minjung theology in Korea, Peasant theology in the Philippines or Dalit theology in India are examples of theology done by grass root people responding to the good news of Jesus Christ in their respective struggles for salvation and fuller life. In this scheme the role of professional theologians and theological colleges is also fully recognised. But their role is that of a servant. Their role is to provide the tools necessary to enable the grass root people to do theology meaningfully and to be sensitive to the theology that a grass root people are doing with their consciousness of being liberated by the power of the Gospel.

How far is this question of the liberating role of theology relevant for Pacific theology? What are the people's struggles in the Pacific reality to which Pacific theology should address itself?

4. Symbols of Asian Solidarity

One of the concerns of Asian theology is to give expression to the faith that Christ has come to reconcile and to unite, and not to divide. But the obvious image projected by the Church through its denominational differences has been one of an additional curse of divisiveness in a situation already plagued with the divisiveness of many religions, castes, classes, languages and other factors. It is in this context Asian theology has to make sense of the Christian faith that in Christ all barriers are overcome and all are united in one new humanity. The Christian affirmation of oneness in Christ has to be made with the awareness of Hindu, Buddhist and other claims of oneness of humanity through their theologies of unity and harmony of all religions. Asian theology is still in a stage of groping for an adequate response to this challenge. I would like to draw attention to the great promise

of a meaningful approach in reinterpreting the two universal sacraments of the Church, Baptism and the Eucharist. These are the great symbols of not only Asian Solidarity but of global human solidarity.

In the way Baptism has been traditionally practised and interpreted in Asia, as in other parts of the world, it has been a sacrament of separation and exclusiveness and has contributed much to scandalous misunderstandings about the Christian mission. Asian theology has also contributed to the ecumenical rethinking of the meaning and practice of Baptism as a sacrament of unity and inclusiveness. To the question whether in order to be baptised and made a member of the Church a person had to cease to be a Hindu or a Buddhist, Asian theology today will not categorically say 'yes', even though institutional churches may say so.

The eucharist is the sacrament of participation in the reality of Christ, his death and resurrection. Traditionally it has been assumed that the universal use of the same elements, bread and wine was a guarantee for the global unity of the Christian people. But the issue is not so simple. There are difficult questions about the meaning of the sacrament and the manner of discernment of the real presence of Christ. The question of whether Jesus had intended bread and wine to be the universal symbols of his presence cannot have a simple answer.

At a recent Seminar Workshop on Doing Theology with Asian Resources held at Hong Kong they had a Eucharistic service, which is described by C. S. Song as follows: "It was a memorable service. The Communion was celebrated not with a loaf of bread and red grape wine, but with a bowl of rice and crystal clear local Green Bamboo leaf wine. It made a lasting impression on us, although it was for all of us the first time to receive cooked rice and transparent wine from the Lord's Table"(5). Dr Song also goes on to explain why they had chosen a bowl of rice and Bamboo leaf wine as the elements for their eucharistic celebration. "It enabled us to 'taste and see that the Lord is good' (Ps.34: 8). In the rice we shared at the Lord's table we become part of the communion of suffering and hope Jesus brought into being through his cross and the empty tomb. That Communion reminded us more strongly than ever before of the fact that rice is life. Rice is not merely the material substance we eat. Rice is life substance. It is life power. It embodies the sum total of Asian humanity..... Just as rice, bamboos are rich in meaning for the life of Asian people. Asia is blessed with abundance of bamboos..... Bamboos give Asia its beauty, poetry, vitality and tenacity..... They can also become a parable of resistance to the repressive powers that infringe upon people's conscience and trample down their humanity."(16)

Even though for the participants of this Workshop it was the first time to have something other than bread and wine for the eucharist, there have been several instances of the use of other elements in different parts of Asia, sometimes because of the non-availability of bread and wine, but sometimes also because of deliberate choice of elements considered as more relevant. Since coming to the Pacific, I have learnt that in Tahiti the first Protestant missionaries had used breadfruit and coconut juice because when they came bread and wine were not available, and that the Cook Islands Christian Church even today uses Coconut and

coconut juice. In an article on Creativity, Integrity and Solidarity in Ministerial Formation in North East Asia, a Japanese theologian Akira Demurra, has pointed out as an illustration for his discussion of text and context, that during the last war some of the Japanese Churches celebrated the Lord's Supper with riceball and soybean soup. It is not easy to depart from a tradition, so universally maintained, of the use of bread and wine. However, it is important to bear in mind that our real unity is in the reality of Christ and not in the universality of the elements. The sacramental experience of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is meant to enable us to go forth into the world to experience and witness to the reality of Christ's presence in the struggles of people. In situations where bread and wine do not represent the common sustenance of life for the people it should be possible to look for more appropriate symbols of Christ's solidarity with the people. Whatever be the elements we use they should challenge us to be involved with the solidarity of Christ with the real struggles of people rather than take our attention away from the people and encourage an escapist spiritualised experience of Christ. We should certainly be critical of the use of the wafer we have inherited from the Western Churches which only helps to make the eucharist further removed from real life.

Does Pacific theology have a role to enable the Pacific Churches to develop more meaningful symbols of Pacific solidarity?

5. Sources for Theology

One of the working papers presented at the Seminar Workshop at Hong Kong was on Sources for Asian Theology. Even though this paper was by John England, a non-Asian member of staff at the Tao Fong Shan Ecumenical Institute in Hong Kong, it represents the Asian theological thinking expressed in several of the recent Asian conferences about the sources for doing theology in Asia. His listing of the sources of theology is based on the insights about Asian theology we have already talked about. It is based on the discernment that "the Living Lord is abroad in all the world, doing the deeds of Jesus Christ in body as well as spirit in society and nation, as well as in person and Church"⁽¹⁷⁾. The sources include all human experience, arts, science, history, all realities of suffering and domination, of aspiration and hope, the lives of the Asian people along with the rich traditions of the Asian religions, the wealth of wisdom and scholarship as well as the courageous insights and faith by which workers and peasants struggle to survive humanly and Christianly. Sources are also to be found "in the lives of countless ordinary people, for theology like ministry, is the task of all members of the Body of Christ and all have callings and gifts." He further goes on to say that "only a deep immersion in the life of our people, a feeling from the heart, even a hazarding of life in the Lord's controversy with our nation, will suffice to reveal the sources and profiles of a confessing theology"⁽¹⁸⁾.

It is for you to consider a similar exploration for determining the sources for doing theology in the Pacific. You also have a rich heritage of myths and legends in your different island cultures, indigenous expressions of Christian devotion, and a history of courageous witness to Jesus Christ and the sending of missionaries.

NOTES

1. Jude 3.
2. Quoted by R.H.S. Boyd in An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology, Madras, Christian Literature Society, 1975. p.109.
3. Douglas J. Elwood, What Asian Christians are Thinking, New Day Publishers, Quezon City, 1976, p. 3.
4. Handbook of the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia, 1984, pp. 26-27.
5. Richard D. N. Dickinson, Poor Yet Making Many Rich, World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1983, p. 52.
6. EACC: The Confessing Church in Aisa and Its Theological Task, 1965, pp. 43-44.

See Also M. M. Thomas, The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance, C.L.S. Press, Madras, 1976, pp. 309-311.

and Emerito P. Nacpil and Douglas J. Elwood (eds), The Human and the Holy, Orbis Books, New York, 1980, pp.233-4.
7. Virginia Fabella (Ed.), Asia's Struggle for Full Humanity, Orbis Books, New York, 1980, pp. 152-3.
8. Voices from the Third World, EATWOT Bulletin, Vol. VII No. 2, December 1984, p. 26.
9. Asia's Struggle for Full Humanity, p. 157.
10. Ibid, p. 156.
11. EATWOT Bulletin op cit, p. 27
12. Op. cit, p. 158.
13. EATWOT Bulletin, op. cit, p. 29.
14. Op. cit, p. 156-7.
15. C. S. Song, A Bowl of Rice with Green Bamboo Leaf Wine, in East Asia Journal of Theology, Vol. II, No. 2, October 1984 p. 180.
16. Ibid, pp. 180-81.
17. In East Asia Journal of Theology, p. 208.
18. Ibid, pp. 208-9.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

Larry Hanman: How can we help our grassroots people to be aware that they can do theology, or in fact are already doing it unconsciously? How can we give them the tools for theological reflection in their village setting?

Russell Chandran: This is for Pacific Islanders to say. But from our Asian discussions came the idea that we must get away from the elitist concept that theology is something done by specialists in theological colleges. Certainly the specialists have a role, but it is the role of enabling the ordinary people to express their faith, to articulate their awareness of the good news of Jesus Christ in their life situations of struggle. We have to find the right relationship between the college type of theology and the theology that is developed at grassroots level. From the ordinary people new insights will come, and elitist theologians should be sensitive to listening to these voices. Exactly how the relationship is to be worked out it is hard for us at the top to say - I think it has to emerge from actual situations where faith is practised.

Oka Fauolo: Could Dr Chandran elaborate on his statement that "Asian Theology today will not categorically say yes" to the question "whether in order to be baptised and made a member of the Church a person has to cease to be a Hindu or a Buddhist."

Russell Chandran: This has been a real issue in India. The traditional approach of missions and churches has been that a person must renounce his Hinduism or Buddhism before he can believe in and belong to Jesus Christ. So the Missionary frontier has been a frontier between Christianity as a religion, and other religions. Late last century there were two notable examples of outstanding converts from Hinduism who were faced with this question of whether they had to give up their whole cultural background. One was a Catholic, and one a Protestant. Both decided, out of their concern to bring all to Christ, that they would call themselves 'Hindu-Christians': they would give up not all that Hinduism stood for, but only those aspects of Hinduism that were contrary to Jesus Christ. Many came to Christ through them, but the institutional Catholic and Protestant Churches rejected this approach. This is still a very pertinent question in India, where the Christian community is only 2½% and is surrounded by people who believe that they also have the truth. In the Early Church, too, Paul was faced with this question: did people have to become Jews first in order to become Christian? The answer given at the Jerusalem council was no. The same question is still faced, though in a different way. The frontier for Christian mission is not between Christianity and the other religions, but between Jesus Christ and all that denies Jesus Christ, between light and darkness, wickedness and righteousness. Here in Fiji I have noticed that those who have come from a Hindu background to the Christian Church have cut themselves off from the Fiji Hindus, and that affects the Christian mission greatly. We need to look again at this whole issue.

Ming-Ya Teng Tu'uholoaki: I am an Asian, a Taiwanese. After listening to this paper I have a very heavy feeling. Most Asians have known great suffering in recent times, not just poverty, but also fear. Fear arising from the political/social situation within Asian countries. This fear has led millions to migrate, to give up their homeland. And now these people are searching for their identity. Are they still Asian? Am I still a Taiwanese? Does Asian theology address itself to this reality? One Chinese theologian has been out of Taiwan for many years. I wonder if there is a big gap between those who are doing the theology and those who are right there facing the real life experience, the fear.

Charles Koete: In the Solomons there is a great barrier between the grassroots people and the church leaders. Our people think that only bishops and priests can be theologians, and that they themselves are not theologians. But I believe that they are indeed theologians: they are doing theology in their daily lives. So both the people and the leaders must be involved. I suggest that in formulating Pacific theology we must use the languages and cultural thought-forms of our people. Also our theology must address itself to the issues that are real to the people. It must emerge from the whole community of believers, not just from the top people. And it must be Christian, that is it must be biblically based, Christocentric, and sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

Etuale Lealofi: This is just an observation. I agree with the 'living theology' principle to some extent: our theology has to be relevant. But is relevance the only criterion? Historically, Christian theology (especially our Christological definitions) has developed through a series of crises, with the result that it is somewhat one-sided and crisis-oriented. Are we to continue in this way, looking only at 'relevant' issues, or should we work for a more balanced theology? Of course, the Good News must meet, in a liberating way, the basic human yearnings. But is our theology to be only a pragmatic science? Should it not be seen as 'religion', in that category of non-rational things, like love?

Finau Tu'uholoaki: This paper helps me appreciate Dr Havea's paper. It seems that 'the Asian perspective' is a critical reflection in terms of a response that is more or less ideological. But in Dr Havea's attempt at a Pacific perspective, the applicability is to everyday life. He chose a highly Christological symbol. He showed that Pacific theology is not simply a reflection on the ideal, but on that ideal dirtied in the ground here and now. Western theology emerges from struggle, but ours begins in celebration. Pacific theology does not spring from the classroom, but from the day-to-day life of the Pacific Islander.

Chris Walker: I am a little uneasy about what we are doing. There are four main areas out of which theology arises: scripture, tradition, reason, and experience arising out of a context. It seems that today we are emphasising only the last. In developing our theology we need to take into account each of those four major aspects. I am also uneasy with the idea that theology must be done just by the people. We don't get our Church History and Biblical

scholarship from the people. Nor can we just hand over responsibility for theology to the people. Certainly it needs to arise from the people, but there must be articulators.

Puafitu Faaalo: Our Pacific people tend to respect college theology: to them it more or less rains down from heaven. And those of us trained in theology tend to regard the grassroots people as having 'weak theology'. But I believe that a valid theology can grow out of the experience of the people. How ready are our Churches to accept the theology that will spring from the people at the grassroots level?

Ralph Teinaore: The early missionaries made decisions about Pacific cultures and traditions from their own point of view rather than from that of the people. I hope that in building a Pacific theology we don't make the same mistake. It is essential to take into account how the people see those elements in our culture that could be used as means of understanding the Gospel. As we go through colleges and universities we can easily lose contact with our own culture, so we must let the people share in building our Pacific theology.

Finau Tu'uholoaki: It may be too restrictive to confine our theology-making to the four areas of scripture, tradition, reason, experience. There may be other areas, like culture. Or does culture come under 'tradition'? We should not be fearful of opening it up and letting the Holy Spirit move.

Faitala Talapusi: The reason why the two laymen spoke about the church as if they were not the church is partly because when we talk about theology we do it in such a way as to cut ourselves off from the lay people. Some of the things Dr Chandran spoke about have been with us for a long time: we talk about poverty, the grassroots people, the coconut in the eucharist, but we do not have the courage to do more than talk about them. In effect we say to the grassroots people, "Don't do it". But the college type of theology should be the servant of the people, not their master. We have plenty of meaningful symbols - the coconut, the ocean, the maneaba - but we do not use them. Pacific people put their ministers and theologians on pedestals, and if we stay up there we will not be addressing issues that are real to the grassroots people, the people we say we are concerned with.

Tevita Havea: The 'Asian perspective' impresses me with its point that the starting point of critical reflection is our situation here and now. But I want to add my opinion that theology is only a vehicle for understanding God. The 'Asian perspective' is that theology springs from the present reality, whether that is suffering or something else. So here in the Pacific we need to look for the reality of life in our own context, and this can be our vehicle for understanding God. Yes, our Pacific theology must be true to the Biblical Gospel, but it must also be relevant and credible in our own situation.

Russell Chandran: I am grateful for the comments that have been made, and glad that my presentation has stirred your thinking. It is in the way you analyse and describe the Pacific reality, and in the way you discern the faith that emerges from the people who are exercising that faith in their struggles for their humanity,

that you will be doing Pacific theology. It is true that we have the four traditional modes that were mentioned - scripture, tradition, reason, and experience - but none of them are precisely identifiable. Scripture, for example, is to be understood only contextually. My time in the Pacific has shown me how time-conditioned the Bible is. In the Bible the sea is a symbol of evil, and our hope is that there will be no more sea. To say that in the Pacific would be blasphemous! Also, scripture and tradition are dialectically related. So, in order to understand these four elements we need to discern the present realities in different situations. I think it was Dr Havea who has spoken of a quest for the Pacific Christ. I think it is an important part of the substance of theology to discern the reality of Christ. In the eucharist we have the sacramental presence of Christ, and the sacrament challenges us to go and discern the real presence of Christ in the world. The Bible tells of how the disciples and others had difficulty in recognising the Risen Lord. After the Resurrection Christ continues to come to us, and the Holy Spirit makes Christ known to us, but Christ comes to us through those whom we meet. In that sense the discernment of the Pacific Christ is important. We are challenged to see Christ in the Pacific people and their struggles. It is there that Christ is. We do not carry Christ. He is there already. But we witness to him, we make him known. We yield ourselves as his body, his instruments, so that through us others may come to know Christ and that through others we may come to know Christ. I hope this Asian perspective will be relevant in the Pacific as well.

Jabez Bryce: It seems that some of you would like certain things to happen, but only at PTC, not at your own colleges! Time and time again we say many things here, but when we go home we don't want to do any of them.

The Chairman then referred to the death of Dr Willem A Visser 't Hooft the previous week, and it was agreed that a message of sympathy be sent to the World Council of Churches.

PACIFIC WOMEN AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

MAN ALONE IS NOT GOOD

AN INQUIRY INTO WOMEN'S ROLE IN THE MINISTRY

by Ming-Ya Teng Tu'uholoaki

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This paper is written in debt to Rosemary Radford Ruether, for her understanding of the issue of female clergy, and Krister Standahl, for his hypothesis of an adequate hermeneutic as Realistic Interpretation.

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Above all, I express my thankfulness to my God and my Lord, who has given me a life with specific racial, sexual and individual identities. It is through the process of experiencing life with its praxis that God reveals to me a ground to search and to claim; to laugh and to shed tears; to dance and to jump; and to fight and to enjoy.

It is needless to say that the paper is written by a person with her distinctive praxis in numerous dimensions, and in particular a concern for pastoral care and counselling.

THE SECONDARY SEX

The objective sensing data is normally interpreted with a subjective dichotomy value system. Unlike race, sex has only two categories. Yet with the very existence of the differences between male and female, sex is then understood qualitatively as one being superior and the other inferior. Therefore, hierarchically one is dominant while the other subordinated.

Throughout the centuries of Christian history, the two sexes have had a fellowship structure. However, there is a radical gulf between the two which constantly challenges us to respond. Sexism is a deeply political issue within human existence. Church institutions are no exception. In fact, the Christian community has proved itself to be as highly competitive as its corresponding secular community. The need to guard the sanctuary becomes the weapon on the battle ground of the politics of sexism.

Ministry in General: From "House Girl" to "Church Girl"

No one can deny the reality that women were and are actively involved in numerous aspects of Christian community life. Nevertheless, while "the water has been changed, the medicine is still the same"(1). Walking out from home only to enter the church, woman merely changes from being a "house girl" (wife) to "church girl" (wife) who serves male members collectively in the church family.

Being a "church girl", either in the women's fellowship or in the deaconess order as a whole, women are meant to be taking charge of meeting the physical demands of men and children through hard labour. Women certainly can enjoy themselves in the "kitchen" and the "entertaining ground" either with or without men. However, women are to be off-stage and undercover (whereby Sarah could hear and laugh about the promise of a son at the tent door and behind the men, and Rebekah also overheard the father-son conversation about the blessing).

While women are highly active in daily/weekly church routine "ministry", men excuse themselves to the conference room for decision making, concerning all kinds of -ologies, policies and directions of the Church life and growth. This means that the "kitchen" members are to be either instructed or simply informed, if they are lucky.

Ministry in Particular: From "Pathogenic Bacteria" to "Inadequate Being".

Whether women should be accepted into the ordained ministry is a critical issue at all times. Since men are the dominating sex, they have the upper-hand. Women are to be "presented" on the conference table for critical analysis and diagnosis, not so much in terms of "doing" but most likely in terms of "being", by which I mean being a female.

Woman for centuries, has been viewed as "pathogenic bacteria", not only being unclean and capable of polluting the clean (male) in general, but being sexually toxic. Thus, woman is to be segregated from men who are essentially pure and good. She is allowed only to minister either to her own sex or to the sick who basically share the same genetic defect. In order to be trustworthy for such ministry, woman is to be either a virgin or an aged widow.

The criterion of being intelligent is not a relevant question, since woman is regarded as either being mentally retarded or with a low I.Q. As "doing" can never justify "being", women are likely to be the outcast from the church fellowship where they are called to belong. Being a female, woman is genetically inadequate to become a "person". Therefore, she is disqualified from joining the ordained ministry where the objects include the hierarchically drop-out male.

Today, the idea of being ministered to by female clergy is still so unbearable that woman is more likely to be an associate pastor where there is a male clergy taking a leading role on top of "her".

A CHILD OF THE PAST

Women, as well as men, are "a child of the Past". However, the contents of the Past of the two are quite different. The Past of the woman is a story of weeping and mourning. Even the women of the first three patriarchs are no exception.

According to the text, all the three women were pretty. Being pretty they had become a threat to the life of the men who "owned" them. Both Sarah and Rebekah were pleaded with to deny their marital status, and thus exposed themselves to the fate of losing their marital fidelity against their own will.

When the men chose their own life rather than the physical and emotional dignity and integrity of the women, Sarah and Rebekah were left with hardly any alternative but to accept the idea being offered. What made it valid was not the "personhood" of the women, but rather the man and his life. The basic reality is that woman was not counted as "a person". She was part of the property, a thing to be taken, or given away; to be shared or even killed as in the case of Leah and Rachel. They were sent before Jacob to meet the brother he once betrayed. According to Jacob, there was a high possibility of being revenged. So Jacob stayed at the tail-end of the line.

The Order of Creation

Genesis II rather than Genesis I has become the more popular criterion for the issue of sexism. The God-Man-Woman order of creation is interpreted as the God-Man-Woman hierarchical relationship. Thus men and women are viewed exclusively as being superior versus inferior and dominant versus subordinate.

According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, "first" means (1) coming or located before all others or occurring or acting prior to all others, (2) ranking above all others

in importance or quality or foremost, best. The former defines an objective reality or phenomenon. The latter denotes a value-judgement.

Apparently man's being created prior to the woman (the objective fact) is interpreted as ranking above woman in importance and quality (subjective value-judgement). If this argument has its validity, then the ground which is created prior to the man should also rank above men in importance and quality.

There is no place in Genesis I and II which indicates subjective evaluation in terms of quality. It was Paul's interpretation that identified the objective sensing data with a subjective value system.

The Domestic Code and "In Christ Jesus"

If the pastoral letters are authentically Pauline, Paul then is spiritually radical but socially conservative. Paul envisions that if the Gospel is to be taken seriously at all, there is of necessity a ONENESS "in Christ Jesus".

Paul is convinced that the non-differentiation featured "in Christ Jesus" includes the non-elected, unchosen Gentiles in the Grace of God. Thus in Galatians 3:28 Paul interprets the essence of the fellowship "in Christ Jesus" as being UNITY.

It is without racial, social and sexual differentiation. We are called to be ONE in Christ Jesus. The Oneness of all who believe in God is "thy Will". "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6: 10).

However, the Domestic Code confines women in the back court of the house. It is in the darkness of that inner court of the domestic area that oneness "in flesh" instead of oneness "in Christ" takes place.

MAN ALONE IS NOT GOOD

The text of Genesis II presents the process of creation. Man was formed "of dust from the ground" while the woman was made by the rib taken "from the man". The order is God - the ground - man - woman. According to Genesis I, both man and woman were created in the image of God, "In the image of God he created him, male and female he created them" (Genesis I: 27b).

The creation of man and woman are described in three different forms:

1. Gen. 2: 15 concerns the creation of man only:
"The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till and keep it."
2. Gen. 2: 18-21 concerns the creation of the woman in terms of God's understanding about the need of the man.

1. Gen. 1: 28b concerns both the man and the woman:
"God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish.....'"

It is striking that the functional aspects of man and woman are basically the same: to till, to subdue and to have dominion over the land and all the other creatures.

Sociality vs Solitude

Genesis 2: 18-21 prescribes both the reason and the process of the creation of woman:

"It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beastand brought them to the man to see what he would call them; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man and while he slept took one of his ribs and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. The man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man'."

According to God, MAN ALONE IS NOT GOOD. Man by himself is not good. Period. The statement is quite general. The author did not bother to say in what way man alone is not good or why man should not be left alone. Yet the meaning of the statement is clear and loud. It is God, not man, who sees that the man being alone is not good. God sees a necessity to "make a helper fit for him".

Von Rad claims that in this passage, solitude is referred to realistically as helplessness while "fit" denotes both similarity and supplementation.⁽²⁾ Being alone, man becomes helpless. There is good in man because he is created in the image of God. But man being alone turns out to be "helpless". (In the American Heritage Dictionary of the English language, "helpless" means to be "unable to manage by oneself or lacking power and strength").

God sees that the presence of the other is needed in order that man can be good. Man is not created to be alone, but rather he is created to relate, interact and be related. Man is to be social. Yet the need to be social is not for the sake of sociality only. The sociality is in terms of getting the help that "fits". Therefore, two necessary conditions are needed so that man can become good. First, the existence of the other. Second, this other can offer the help that fits.

Woman vs Man

In the creation of the other person, man had no role and played no part. Man was not aware that he was in need of the other. Man was not consulted, neither was he informed. In fact, man was put to sleep.

It was woman, not another man, that God made for the man. It is in the woman that man finds both the sociality and the help that is similar yet supplementary to his own. Nevertheless, it is not for man to decide the kind of help he needs from the woman, since in the first place man was not aware that his being alone was not good. Neither was he aware of the fact that he was in need of help in order to be good. Without knowing even what he needs, man is never in a position to determine the type of help woman should provide.

The text leaves the issue of help open. There was neither description nor prescription about the type of help and the way to help. However, the man himself gave a comment about the woman in terms of his own relationship to her. "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Thus, the identity given to the woman contains no value judgement but an objective reality - "because she was taken out of man". Because the woman was taken out of man, man needs her back. Because the woman is the missing part of the man, woman is not replaceable. The text confirms it by concluding the creation story with the statement: "Therefore, a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." BECOMING ONE FLESH "in Christ" is thus the authentic man-woman relationship. Only then woman is free to offer the help fit for man "in Christ".

REDEFINING THE ISSUE

Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, in her book In Memory of Her, A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins (1983), argues for the necessity of a non-conception of early Christian history and thus attempts to transform and reconceptualise it. It represents one of the recent attempts to search for a further break-through on the issue of sexism in Christian faith. K Stendahl and R R Ruether represent two earlier outstanding efforts along the time-line on the same issue.

Praxis and the Hermeneutics

Stendahl made women's role his case study in hermeneutics. He argues the necessity of being aware of the gap between the centuries of "there and then" and "here and now"; to recognise that "everything is conditioned by the actual situation of the time"; and to "re-experience" the Gospel as the apostles and our forefathers experienced it.⁽³⁾

Stendahl rightly states that the contextual situation is a crucial element in hermeneutics in relation to exegesis. Praxis is a concrete reality where men are conditioned by a particular time and space. Based on the praxis, American blacks claim

their own black/liberation theology. Based on another praxis, South Africans cry out their own black/liberation theology. Based on yet another praxis, Gutierrez fights for his understanding of the third world/liberation theology within the context of Latin America.

As human creatures, men and women, are bound to the praxis. Paul's being spiritually radical and socially conservative reveals yet another dilemma and tension in human existence. A human, with its inescapable creaturehood, is in the process of sanctification. Paul proves that the revelation in spirit does not automatically guarantee that a radical revolution in practical life will take place.

Paul is apparently inconsistent in his stand on the issue of women and sexism. His reluctance or inability to proclaim and insist on the indifferentiation "in Christ Jesus" is clear and loud. Nevertheless, it is understandable that within the praxis of his time and space Paul exhibits a double standard.

There is no need to work out an excuse for him. Neither is there a need to look for a logical solution for it. The inconsistency is never news. It was a practice right from the patriarchs to Paul (if Paul is the authentic author of the letters). When the text is allowed to speak to us, the validity of praxis and the imperfect humanity can then be recognised and acknowledged.

The Concepts of Ministry and Leadership

Ruether made an effort to identify the root of "the modern identity crisis of the clergy" (4). According to Ruether, the problem is in the misunderstanding and the mal-interpretation of the nature and meaning of ministry and leadership.

Apparently, the concept of ministry and leadership is one of the keys to the whole issue of women's role in the ministry. On the one hand, Jesus defines and redefines that the ministry is a servanthood. To minister is to serve. The greatness is in terms of serving. It is never in the occupation of some status within the hierarchical levels that one can claim his/her ministry.

To become one who ministers is to become a servant who serves. Nevertheless, women who serve are so often regarded by men, and even women, as lowly, foolish, inadequate, unrepresentable, incapable and inferior in many ways. Thus they are in a position of subordination not so much to God the Lord, but, unfortunately, to men who are at the top of the hierarchy.

On the other hand, the prophets of the Old Testament warned the Israelites concerning their misunderstanding of the meaning of "the Chosen One". Since the Israelites interpreted being "chosen" as a favour and a privilege to enjoy, to boast about and permitting them to oppress others, the prophets bitterly rebuked their sinfulness. The Israelites were never to interpret their being chosen as the right to push every one else "down and out".

The chosen one is to become a bridge in order that all "the other" nations may be included and blessed. The one true God is the God of inclusiveness. Israelites are never in a position to lead and dominate but to suffer and reveal that inclusive love and sovereignty of Yahweh. Israelites are not in any position to represent God's leading by dominating others. They are to suffer with and for the others in order to reveal the righteousness of God who in turn makes all righteous. It was in this deep level of the understanding of ministry and leadership that Yahweh called Abraham, not because he was any better than others. The calling is in Him and for all.

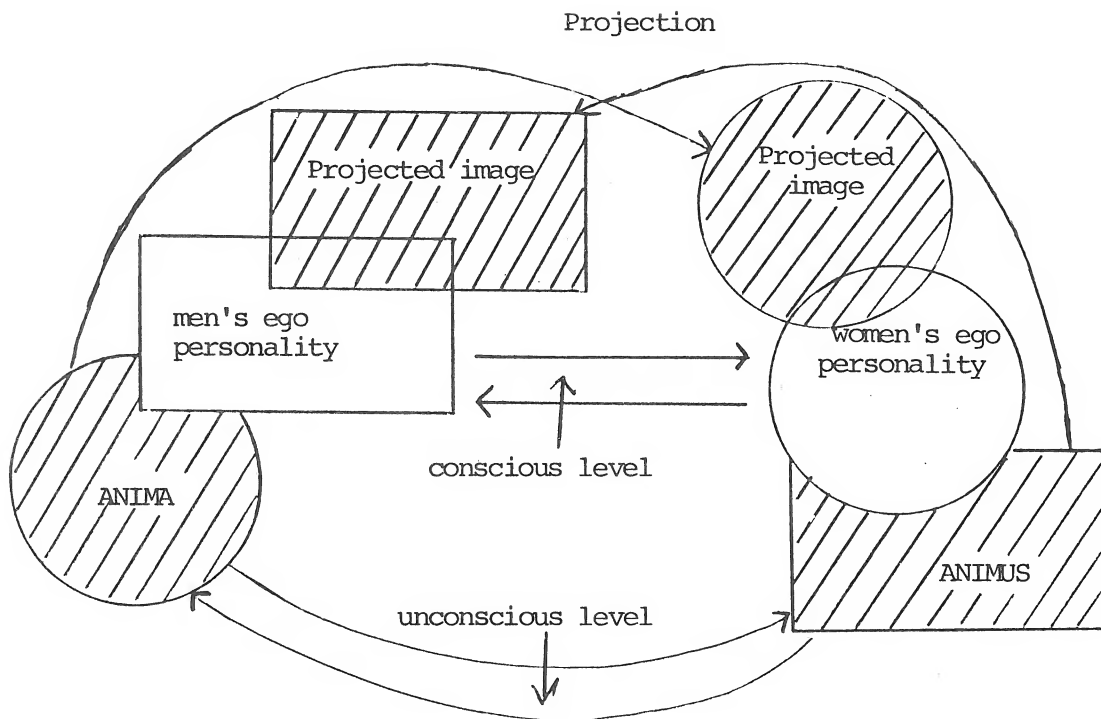
Unfortunately, men misunderstand and misinterpret the role of leadership hierarchically. Thus man becomes the representative of God. Since He is superior, they therefore assume that they are superior to dominate others and to demand a subordination from these others, especially the women. The Ministry is thus divided into ministry-in-general which is open to others and ministry-in-particular from which women, especially, are excluded.

Androgyny and Psychic Projection

C G Jung in his understanding of men and women presents the concepts of the anima and animus. Anima is the feminine component in a man's personality while animus is the masculine component in a woman's personality. John A Sanford called these archetypes "the invisible partners" in every human creature (or the shadow personality).

Jung claims that these archetypes are essential building blocks in the psychic structure of men. However, these archetypes (namely the anima and animus) are more likely to be obvious to others but unknown to ourselves. They are also more likely to be projected upon the other as though they belong to the other and have nothing to do with us. When it happens, they are seen more clearly. For in such cases, they are either overvalued or undervalued.

Jung also indicates that projection is an unconscious mechanism. Only unconscious contents are likely to be projected. Once it becomes conscious, projection ceases. The anima and animus have both positive and negative aspects. They are personified upon the other. In other words, it is the other who carries our projection of either the positive or the negative anima or animus.



* This is a modified diagram from Sanford's original diagram on p. 17 in "The Invisible Partner".

Therefore, men tend to project the shadow, the dark personality, upon women and see it as belonging to the woman and having nothing to do with themselves. Thus man is overvalued and seen as essentially good, moral and intelligent in nature, whereas woman is undervalued as bad, destructive and foolish. Man sees woman as not merely apt to sin, but pathogenic bacteria which is poisonous in itself and toxic to man. Man becomes a destructive and fallen creature only when he is in contact with the unclean woman. The very presence of female can pollute the purity of male. Woman carries the projected negative anima and becomes the "Identified Patient"(5). She is to be blamed and accused. Woman who carries the symptom of all the projected sinful side of personalities of man can never be at the top of the hierarchy but at the bottom to serve.

THE GOSPEL

Is there any Good News for woman through which she is entitled to fulfil her personhood? Does female sexuality have to be so costly that woman needs to pay for it all her life "on earth" now? Is her dignity only to be fully recognised "in heaven"? Is woman to be a curse upon her own life? Is man ever going to release woman from the bondage he sets for her?

The Object and the Subject of the Good News: From Alienation to Reconciliation.

If there is anything good in the Gospel, it is its assurance of RECONCILIATION "in Christ". When man alienated himself from God, he also alienated himself from woman. Through these double alienations man ultimately rejects his own true "self". This is what SIN is all about - a total rejection in relationship.

Sexism probably is the most deep rooted alienation, a collective sin revealed in the history of Christianity. If reconciliation between man and God is to take place, man and woman have to be reconciled to each other first.

The Essence of the Good News: The Impartial and all Inclusive Grace.

Grace is God's prescription for reconciliation with Him. The only acceptable 'counter-act' of human kind to this free gift is faith. As this gift is given freely, nothing is needed nor required from man. It is too simple for the complicated entity, called man, to just simply believe.

The calling of Abraham is based totally on God's grace. We were never told that Abraham's call was based on his being good. (In fact the text reveals the dark aspects of Abraham's humanity). Similarly, Israel is chosen on the basis of the promise of grace. There is nowhere any mention of Israel being chosen because he was faithful and obedient. The Book of Exodus reveals the story of the disobedience of Israel.

The choice and call are solely on the basis of God's grace. The gracious God called and blessed the morally defective Abraham. The gracious God chose and preserved the disobedient, stiff-necked Israelites. There is no description of the patriarchs or Israelites as being intelligent and capable. The issue is not the quality of man. The focus is on the precious grace of God. Through Grace human kind surpasses the dividing lines of races, social structures and sexes and finds meaning only in the incarnated hope within the gracious event of Jesus Christ. It is the impartial and all-inclusive grace in Christ that unites all races, all social classes and both sexes in the agape of God. It is this Gospel that Christianity proclaims. Therefore, our Lord Jesus once taught us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven".

NOTES

1. A popular Chinese saying, "The change takes place only on the surface or the appearance".
2. von Rad, 1972, p. 82.
3. Stendahl claims that the theory of realistic interpretation prevailed in Sweden in the last three decades in the hypothesis to overcome the gap between "back there then" and "here and now" for a better grasp of the unchanging essence of the Christian message. (Stendahl, 1966, pp. 12-13).
4. Ruether, 1975, p. 76.
5. The member of a family who carries the symptom of pain affected by the pained marital relationship or dysfunctional parenting. It is functioning at the unconscious level and the family members normally are not aware of its function. The symptom sends out a message of pain in the family.

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THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY

IN THE PACIFIC

by Peteru Tone

Introduction

I take great pleasure in presenting to members of this delegation this paper dealing with The Place of Women in the Church and Society in the Pacific. I must admit first of all that this topic is not an easy one for me. I have not visited most of the Pacific countries. I have only spent four years in Fiji and have made two short visits to Tonga. So to speak of the place of women in the Church and Society in the Pacific would be too wide and too difficult a subject to be dealt within a paper of this sort and by a person of my calibre. Therefore the paper will concentrate mainly on the activities of women in the Church and Society in the Samoan community. References will be made to other Pacific countries, but the core of the discussion is in the Samoan context, although I think some of the issues raised in the paper will apply generally to women anywhere in the world.

The paper deals first of all with the varied activities carried out by the women's organisations both at village and national levels, thus showing the place women occupy in the Samoan community. Then a short discussion on the role of women in women's organisations in the Church and within the Church hierarchy follows.

Women in Traditional Society in Samoa

Traditionally, Samoan villages were conceptually divided into two parallel spheres of activity or domains - O le nu'u tama'ita'i ma le nu'u o le ali'i - which may be classed as "the village of the ladies and the village of the gentlemen." The term, "village of the ladies" refers to the aualuma or society of unmarried, separated or widowed girls, and women who were members by right of descent, or adoption, of village aiga (families). The term "village of the men" refers to the two male groups, the fono or council of matai (titled men) and the society of untitled men called the aumaga. The fono is the executive and judicial authority of the village and the aumaga carried out the will of the fono.

This traditional set-up divided each village into male and female spheres of interest. The aualuma or society of women who were members of local descent groups, played a major role in ceremonial matters, particularly in the reception and entertainment of visiting parties and in the manufacture of exchange valuables. On the male side, the aumaga carried out the will of the council of chiefs or fono in political and military matters,

in production of food, fishing and housebuilding.

In terms of village services, women's work was traditionally that of producing woven pandanus goods for domestic and commercial use. "Work in primitive economics is in relatively unspecialised occupations being assigned primarily according to sex. If a particular kind of work is customarily assigned to women, men will rarely engage in it and vice versa. Even where men and women cooperate in occupations, the work may be divided along sex lines. In most societies men feel somewhat ashamed if they must perform the tasks normally carried out by women."(1)

In Samoa the wives of the ali'i (high chiefs) were referred to as faletua meaning "the house at the back" - this title of address refers to the working houses at the back of a dwelling where female activities such as preparing pandanus for weaving, and the manufacture of thatch, blinds and tapa cloth were carried out. The wives of tulafale (talking chiefs) were referred to as tausi, meaning caretakers. This term also alludes to the role of the orator's wife in rendering service to the faletua. Although this implies a secondary place, Samoan women had clearly defined and contrasting statuses as sisters and co-descendants, which awarded them independent status and rank, and as wives in which their status and rank derived from that of their husband.

In many Pacific countries so-called tradition keeps women tied to the home and prevents them from taking advantage of educational and work opportunities.

The devaluation of women's work is a universal phenomenon and has its origins in the sex-role structure of society which is maintained by persistent ideological themes which place males and females in separate and unequal classificatory spheres. Sexual division of labour is rooted not in biology, but in custom and tradition although it is often attributed to physical differences between men and women and thus given a biological rationale. Throughout the world the most regular and consistent component of women's role is as a wife and mother. Her work, whatever it is, has as its primary importance and purpose the support and maintenance of her household and family. Women's work is thus bounded by her domestic framework concerned with the familial sector of society. There is in Samoa an explicit sexual division of labour. In its most general aspect, this division attributes to women work that is light, clean and focussed on the central village and household areas. Thus, Samoan women fit into the pattern mentioned above.

In traditional Samoan society, the aualuma had considerable prestige and influence in ceremonial matters. They could veto decisions taken by the council of chiefs in certain circumstances. Today, female descent rights are more often recognised by allowing women equal rights to chiefly titles along with men. Rank was normally acquired by inheritance - but where there was no descent of rank through the female line, the women could assume positions of power and privilege through election.

Present Status

If we ask the question - what exactly is a women's place? - the answer ten or more years ago would have been very different from

what it would be today. I think this applies to all the countries in the Pacific. Even five years ago, a woman's place was considered mainly to be in the home or in such accepted female professions as teaching, nursing and secretarial work. Today, however, all this has changed and continues to change rapidly.

The United Nations Decade for Women is now in its final year. The end of the decade sees a marked improvement in the status of women in most parts of the world, while in others, particularly in rural and poor urban areas, women are worse off today than they were five years ago, according to reports.⁽²⁾ Times are changing rapidly in Pacific countries. Over recent decades economic prosperity and greater educational opportunities have lessened the influence of tradition and increased the independence of the individual in his society.

At the world conference held in Mexico City in 1975, the situation of women and what could be done to improve their lot was discussed. A Plan of Action was adopted for the advancement of women. This plan laid down a series of actions for governments to take throughout the following ten years and was established with the intention of strengthening the implementation of the programmes adopted concerning the status of women, and to broadening them and placing them in a more contemporary context. The Plan also aimed to stimulate national and international action to solve the problems of under-development and of socio-economic structures which place women in inferior positions in order to achieve the goals of the decade: Equality, Development and Peace, and the sub-themes of Education, Health and Employment.

A Program of Action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women was established at the world conference in Copenhagen in 1980. The programme focussed on ensuring women's increased participation in the realisation of the objectives of the World Plan of Action which gives high priority to improving the conditions of the most underprivileged groups of women, especially the rural and urban poor and the vast group of women in the tertiary working sector. These priorities were reiterated by the Programme of Action.

Throughout the world most governments adopted strategies for the advancement of women which incorporated the World Plan of Action. Most countries now have legislation guaranteeing equal rights for women, and a large number of governments have established women's bureaux and commissions to speed up achievements towards equal opportunities.

The Decade in the Pacific

Throughout the Pacific women are reasserting themselves, regaining lost traditional skills and discovering new ones. The creation of a Pacific Women's Resource Bureau in the New Caledonian capital of Noumea is fostering new national women's councils. Hilda Lini, sister of the Vanuatu Prime Minister, is its first programme development officer. She says: "The term feminism is virtually unknown in the South Pacific. Pacific women have firm and strong beliefs on the subject, but not in the terminology of the Western World. My understanding of the concept of feminism

is an activity organised by women to care for women's rights and interests." (3)

Hilda Lini believes such activities include women speaking out where their lives are affected by traditions, social structures and laws; women initiating projects to improve their basic needs in the home, in food supply and water supply; and women taking a role in the planning and building projects in their community.

The bureau was founded following a series of women's meetings in the Pacific, after a conference in 1975 decided on the need of a coordinating centre. A Pacific Women's Resource Centre set up here in Suva that year lasted only eighteen months because of a lack of funds. But another bureau became top priority in a Pacific Action Plan for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women, (1981-85).

David Robie reported that at a South Pacific Conference in Papua New Guinea in 1980 the role of Pacific women was discussed by men delegates. Papua New Guinea women marched into the conference room and demanded that women be included in the talks. (4)

A Pacific Women's Seminar in Tahiti in 1981 worked out the bureau's role, and Hilda Lini became its first officer, for English-speaking countries. "In 1983 Marie-Claire Beccalossi of New Caledonia joined to work with the French Pacific. She has a wide experience in women's work and has run programmes for village sick and elderly." She organised teaching courses involving self-reliant developmental skills, such as making smokeless stoves and traditional skills that are being lost, such as basket-making and weaving.

Hilda Lini says, "Traditional practices which reduce women to the roles of domestic servants, family providers and child-bearers, and which deny them the benefits of educational and employment opportunities, are thinly disguised as immutable cultural mores. Women are confined to being second-class citizens by the social structure of Pacific societies." (5)

Statistics show that in every facet of the Pacific educational ladder fewer women than men have an opportunity to get to a higher level, she claims. In government - except in education and health - men outnumber women workers, inaccurately reflecting and distorting the qualifications and abilities of women to hold responsible positions.

All these examples show that women in the Pacific are on the move. They realise that in traditional societies they hold subordinate positions. They are struggling to get out of this so-called "customs and traditions tie" which undermines women's potential and denies the equality of all men and women in societies.

The Decade in Samoa

The National Council of Women, established in 1953, had as leaders wives and sisters of the highest-ranking chiefs in Samoa.

Village women's committees also had services and support from the Government's Department of Health. Throughout the Decade, several programmes for women were launched in Samoa. In 1979, a Women's Advisory Committee was set up under the Prime Minister's Department. The establishment of this committee for women at a national level was a major step in women's affairs, and made possible their integration into the national development process. The Advisory Committee enjoys autonomy, a high advisory status, and is directly responsible to the Prime Minister and Cabinet on all welfare matters and women's role in the development in Samoa. Its two important aims are:

1. to improve women's participation in the economy and decision-making process, and
2. to improve the situation for women, especially in their role in agriculture, and to coordinate with all funding bodies.

An on-going vocational training programme was established for out-of-school young women to teach them skills towards self-employment. In conjunction with this programme, a revolving loan fund was established to provide credit to set up in-home small scale industries with the Development Bank and funded by the United Nations Voluntary Fund for women.

To promote family nutrition and general health, a home gardening project was implemented at the village level by the Women's Advisory Committee in collaboration with the Health Department. A great improvement in material standards and child health care has been the result of this united effort.

Women in Development in Western Samoa

It is not within the scope of this paper to go into a detailed discussion of all the different roles played by women in the development of the Samoan community. Women are involved in and are participating in almost all sectors of community development. So, a summary of a few of the many projects by women which contribute to the development of the Samoan community will suffice for our purpose.

In the fourth Five Year Development Plan (1980-85) a policy paper on Women in Development was written for the first time. A multisectorial approach was envisaged as the necessary mechanism for the integration of women into the development process. The National machinery, the Women's Advisory Committee, is held responsible for implementing this policy.

Rural women especially are encouraged to participate at all sectorial levels through the provision of credit, technical and advisory services. Not only this, but material standards and child health services have vastly improved for rural families and as well there is a continuing education programme of relevant skills and training. In agriculture and rural development, women are encouraged to submit project proposals and be assisted to develop efficient marketing and training cooperatives.

Many studies have shown that rural development in developing countries tend to disadvantage women. The main reason for this has been an assumed division of labour between the sexes in which females perform largely non-productive service tasks in the home while males work productively outside the home. Thus development planning and skills and technology learning was male-orientated.

In Samoan society, the contribution of women to subsistence and commercial agriculture was of secondary importance. The situation is changing however, with an increasingly monetised economy resulting in the need to supplement family income and women in Samoa now play a complementary labour role to men, for the same crops and livestock.

The introduction of a small crop project is proving popular among women's groups and youth groups where there is a greater willingness to seek out money-earning ventures and to spread the effects in producing crops.

The Department of Agriculture recognises the potential of women's contributions towards increased agricultural production and has promoted this through the encouragement of their participation in rural development activities. This has led to the inclusion of women in extension training programmes and field days as well as in new cash cropping activities such as cocoa-growing, copra and also passionfruit schemes. Young women are also encouraged to take up studies in agriculture at a tertiary level.

Agriculture will remain the backbone of Western Samoa's economy. Currently women's groups participate in a wide range of new and traditional economic activities which include commercial agriculture, animal husbandry, and handicraft manufacture. They provide the backbone of the rural health services and play a major role in financing and installation of communal facilities.

It is obvious then that to an increasing extent Samoan women feel the need to play an active part in participating in the planning and decision making process. Since women make up nearly half the population of Samoa and as their lives and those of their families can be affected by national decisions, they consider it essential that they be actively involved in the process. Rural women still to some extent constitute a deprived group in the aspects of poverty, lack of education and status. The poor among them are handicapped in comparison to the more privileged matai, the educated and the wealthy.

Development projects have brought women to the political scene as a new organised economic force, apart from their existing role as committees of women. Women's role in raising basic issues is all important. It extends to their contribution to development and involves large sections in the struggle against poverty with its resultant handicaps. This role is largely unrecognised, and this lack of recognition reflects the lesser position women still occupy in Samoan society. The majority of rural women are therefore almost invisible. They are organised in groups initially for health purposes, but the horizon is limited.⁽⁶⁾

Women in the Church

There are three major denominations in Western Samoa, with increasing membership also in smaller churches. Women occupy different positions in different denominations, so my views are from the point of view of a Congregational minister.

Women play a very important role in church activities today. Women are represented at all levels of decision-making, even though their role in the church is still seen as auxiliary. Samoan women in most villages now devote more of their energy and resources to raising funds for the churches than ever before. The General Conference of the Congregational Christian Church holds the authority on all matters and women as well as men are represented. The position of chairman and the other high offices of the church are occupied by men, but women are also recognised, together with their husbands according to the ranks they hold.

In church structure, women have their own separate conference. This year in Samoa the women celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of the women's church organisation. This women's organisation has a chairperson and their resolutions are given to the Church General Conference for approval. Women play almost the same role as their husbands in the Parish. The wife of a parish minister has a lot of work to do. She becomes the leader of the church women's organisation at village level. She leads women's services during the week and also participates in meetings and decision-making in the church at village level. She works together with her husband in almost every section of the ministry except preaching during Sunday services.

Lay women of the church also play a vital role in the running of the parish and its activities, being busily involved in the organising and running of the Sunday schools and other related activities, along with fund-raising efforts.

Women And Ordination

At present only men are trained to be parish ministers in the local Congregational Church Theological Seminary. There is no rule against the ordination of women, but the church, I think, is not prepared yet for this step of ordination of women. The church is still following the traditional pattern which excludes women from preaching. The facilities in the local theological college do not cater for women at this present time.

But I think it is about time the church began to consider seriously the question of women's ordination for the Pastoral ministry. It may be a difficult move, because of customary attitudes and traditional beliefs. But times are changing and traditional attitudes must also change for the betterment of the church. I believe that the church should prepare for this change. Freedom should be given to women to consider ordination, thus giving them equal rights, not only in the decision-making process, but also in the carrying out of those decisions in the church ministry. As a community, the whole church is to teach one another, and engage in theological self-reflection on its own ministry to each other.

Opponents who choose to argue for the subordination of women to men often draw on I Corinthians 14: 33-35. In this passage, Paul is invoking the story of the Fall to argue that women should have a subordinate role in church life. According to Genesis 3:16, one of the consequences of the Fall was the subordinate place of women.

Yet the same Paul who instructs women to be "subordinate even as the law says" also asserts that "in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor man of woman", I Corinthians 11: 11-12, and in Galatians 3:28. The theological importance of the Galatian passage is underscored by the fact that it speaks of a new order which reverses the effects of the Fall. In Romans 5:18 Paul says: "Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation of all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men." The subordination of women to men was one of the effects of the Fall as we know from Genesis 3:16. In Christ's death and resurrection we are free from bondage to the sinful conditions of existence that obtained under the Fall. The rule of men over their wives is clearly a result of that Fall, as we see from Genesis 3:16, and precisely one of those sinful conditions of human existence from which we have been saved by God's work for us in Christ.

The ministry of the early Church does not reveal a definite organisational pattern to be followed by the ecclesiastical ministry in later centuries, but it presents the Church with revealed norms, valid for all times, by which the organisational patterns of ecclesiastical ministry must be tested in each age. The New Testament also presents various styles of Christian leadership, all of which are obedient to the common norms. We read that the Apostolic activity concerned with spreading the Gospel and protecting its unity was accompanied by various offices such as teaching, prophesying, baptising, presiding at worship and various forms of service. In the New Testament period these offices were exercised by different people in the community. What counts in the subsequent ages of the Church is not the material fidelity to the structures of the early Church, but the formal fidelity to the norms, guiding the ministry in the early Church and to the variety of functions exercised in it.

What follows from this is that the Church in every age is free to adapt its religious leadership to the socio-political ideals of the age and to recognise its ministry to meet the needs of the Christian people - as long as its religious leadership seeks to incarnate the normative values revealed in the teaching of Jesus and the ministry of the Apostolic Church.

Through the Church and its ministry God continues to address the human family. As the Church is to reveal what authentic human community is to be like, so the Church ministry is to reveal what leadership and authority are to be like in a truly human community.

Since people today have become aware of the oppression of women through various cultural and religious traditions of the ages, and since the Kingdom proclaimed by Christ promises us deliverance from all the elements of oppression the Church ought

to reveal through its ordained religious leadership that men and women are destined to be equal.

Conclusion

What I have written thus far shows that women play a very important and indispensable role in community development and also in the ministry of the Church. But women, although their contributions are varied and important, are deprived of other privileges and opportunities and thus they occupy subordinate positions to the male in society.

There is no doubt that in many Pacific countries, women are deprived in this aspect in their respective communities because of tradition and customs and the reluctance to change. I believe that it is now time that Pacific countries looked into their various customs and traditions in the light of the teachings of Jesus. There is no doubt that our customs and traditions are God-given gifts for the good of community life. But where these customs and traditions fall short of the New Testament teaching about love and equality we should re-evaluate them.

Women in the Pacific should be given equal rights with men in every sector of community life. They should also be given equal opportunities with men in employment and should receive equal salaries according to qualifications.

With respect to the Church, everyone, men and women, should be given the freedom to exercise whatever they feel called by God to do for the good of the Church's ministry. We should not limit the freedom of women by depriving them of the various offices in the Church. Christ came to set us free and it is in our life as a Christian that this freedom should be seen. If the Church adheres to customs which deprive others of their freedom to enjoy life, then I believe she is not faithful to her calling in the world - to proclaim the liberation of men and women from injustice, sin and death.

N O T E S

1. Savali, August 1984, p. 14.
2. Savali, February 1985, p. 8.
3. New Zealand Women's Weekly, 8 October, 1985.
4. New Zealand Women's Weekly, 8 October, 1985.
5. David Robie, 1984, p. 27.
6. Nailini p. 85.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

Charles Forman: If I understand it correctly, in traditional Samoan society women's place was largely determined by her own inheritance and lineage and not in terms of their husbands' roles. Samoan society would traditionally have given a woman an important role in her own life and not in the light of her husband's work. What is now being called for is in some respects the restoration of the rights which women used to receive traditionally.

Lorine Tevi: We are at a crucial time now where the challenge is for us to clarify clearly what is the specifically unique contribution the church can give to the women's movement in the Pacific. As women begin to assert their rights in the region as a whole, especially in the context of our Pacific society where the church and society are so much together, it is important that the church helps church women to identify what is their specific role. Otherwise we will miss out in the whole women's movement and the message of the Gospel will not come through.

I would also like to record my very great disappointment that in the official delegations to this consultation there is no Pacific woman. Ming-ya Teng Tu'uholoaki and one of our male brothers presented papers. Yesterday the two major papers were given by lay people, but no Pacific Church women's opinion was included. I would love to have seen a paper by an indigenous Christian woman of the Pacific. I sit here and my heart cries.

In the movement of the life of the churches in the Pacific, it is important that we consider the women's role seriously as we participate in our struggle together.

There are several questions that come into my mind in the light of the topic that we are discussing:

1. What are the present roles of the majority of Pacific women in the church's ministry in the Pacific now?
2. What are the issues facing women's ministry?
3. Which of these issues are theological/biblical, which cultural and traditional and which sociological?
4. What is our evaluation of these different kinds of issues?
5. What can be done to help deal with them?
6. Are Pacific men attitudinally ready to accept women as equal partners in all the areas of church ministries?
7. What would be the ecclesiological implications of both men and women being accepted as equal partners in the church ministries in the Pacific?

Russell Chandran: In raising and answering questions the groups should bear in mind the role of Theological Education in relation to the place of women in the ministry.

Samuel Akle: Women's ordination may be a difficult question to touch. I would suggest that these questions be focussed on the changes that can happen at the present moment, such as the involvement of women in training, not necessarily for ordination, so that they can be prepared for the ministries that are already available. In this way some women may be ordained later when their church makes a decision in favour of the ordination of women.

There are two other important issues involved. The first is our whole understanding of the interpretation of the scriptures. The second relates to the kind of church we really want. Do we really want a church in which the community of men and women becomes a reality?

Ruby Vaa: I feel that women have a lot to do with theological education. What we women do in the Sunday Schools and in the home is very important in the lives of Christians. What we put in gives a lot of background to what you men put in to your classes of theology. The backup support from women in the Sunday Schools and the home is very important.

Olovia Nataniela: I would like to share how I felt during a recent experience of visiting Women's Fellowships around Fiji for the last three months. Ministers and even the President of the Methodist Church are used to saying that women are backbones of the church. But women are not only in the backroom. They have many opportunities and privileges of becoming good partners with men in building the Church of Jesus Christ in the Pacific - in the home, in the community and human society in the world. I have heard that some women felt that God was calling them for a greater part in presenting the Gospel. I really feel that women already in ministry participate in the church not only because it is happening in other parts of the world, but because of God's call. We have to be sure that we are called by Jesus Christ, and not just because we compare ourselves with men.

GROUP REPORTS

GROUP 1:

1. The Family: There is a momentum in the South Pacific to resist change. The family is in many ways the focal point of conservation. If women are to be liberated from a subservient role to men, and if they are to become equals with men in the partnership of shared responsibility we need a strongly developed or forcefully taught theology of the Christian family in which the roles of father, mother and children and others are spelt out.
2. Men's Liberation: The Group felt that men need to be liberated from their habitual desire to dominate. Womens Fellowships often invite men; Mens fellowships rarely invite women. Kava drinking causes women and children to suffer. The men attach such a high priority to it that often no time is left to spend with their womenfolk and with their children.
3. Prayer: The only way in which to get one's perspectives clear regarding the status and role of women in the South Pacific is through prayer. It is due to our failure to attach a top priority to the life of prayer that we go on muddling through with "no change" as in policy.
4. Preparation: Women will not come forward for training unless the right openings at the right level with the right aims are created for them by the churches. Such opportunities should exist from the level of the village Bible Class, through Sunday school training, to the level of simple training for specific service in the work of the church.
5. Entrance Procedures: On those rare occasions in the South Pacific when women have applied to theological Colleges, they have sometimes been rejected with no reasons given. They are entitled to know, in order that they may put the disqualifying deficiencies right. Otherwise suspicion of male prejudice becomes possible.
6. Theological Study: Where women with competence in theological study have been accepted for training in theological Colleges, they have sometimes proved to be outstanding. Sometimes such women have only gained acceptance as theological students through being married to accepted theological students. Sometimes such women have demonstrated a greater ability than their husbands and this sets up a problem in the sphere of husband-wife relationships especially where the husband is not fully liberated from his male prejudices.
7. Ministry: The Churches must use to the full the specialities of these fully qualified theologically trained women. Colleges can only draw the attention of Church leaders to the gifts these women possess. When allowed to use their gifts to the full such women can make a vital contribution to the theological training of Christian women at lower levels.

The Churches must open up as a priority the right theological opportunities for women to train. The time has come to re-evaluate theological education in the light of this. Ministry means more

than ordination. The Church is a community of service and all its members are called to be servants.

GROUP II:

1. The Place of Women in Society: Women are given a secondary role in society. Some assume that this is because of what the Bible says. Traditional beliefs are also very strong in keeping women in their right place in Pacific societies. Both women's and men's rights are to be seen not as a garland around the neck to be paraded in public but as an activity in response to a call.

2. Women's Role in the Church: Women have an important educational role in the home and in the Sunday School. Very little is being done to train women for these important roles, in most Pacific churches, except perhaps Samoa. Women are happy to help their husbands as co-workers in the church. This kind of team ministry is important if both are to offer effective team ministry in the church.

3. Ordination of Women: Although most territories train women for ministry, when it comes to ordination the church says, "No, it is not yet time". But the churches in the Pacific must look at the changing role of women today, as well as the life that Jesus teaches us to follow.

4. Equality: Men and women are equal in God's sight. The group therefore makes the following suggestions:

- i) Each church in the Pacific should study the papers and implement what is appropriate in their situation.
- ii) Each church should study in each locality the traditional beliefs about women, as well as what the Old and New Testaments say, so that they can help people see that both women and men can perform an effective ministry in the church.
- iii) All theological colleges and seminaries should be open to all the people of God, both laymen and laywomen, not only for ordination but to equip God's people for witness and leading people in God's kingdom.
- iv) We need Pacific Theologians to think, interpret and write about these issues.

GROUP III:

1. Vocation: Men should not decide what the role of women should be in relation to divine call and ministry. Women as well as men should be free to follow the vocation God calls them to.

2. Timing: There are problems at the moment about the ordination of women in some churches and cultures. Some see this as a sign that the time is not yet ripe for the ordination of women. Others believe that in the light of the understanding of the Gospel and the social changes of the present, the time is right to take a step that would not have been possible in the past.

3. Different, but Equal? In Western countries such as the USA the question of ordination of women has been related to women wanting to gain status by doing the same work as men. Do Pacific cultural patterns suggest ways in which women can be different but equal?

4. Understanding of Ordination: An underlying question is, what is ordination for? It often relates to a change of status in society, ceremonial leadership and the right to perform certain ritual acts. Different denominations have differing understandings of the meaning of ordination and what it confers on the ordained. A fresh study of the meaning and practice of ordination is called for.

GROUP IV:

1. The subordination of Women in Society and the Church: It is recognised that in many ways the structures of society and the church put women in an inferior position socially and culturally. But this is a difficult matter. It is important to understand Pacific cultures correctly. It is felt by some that in some cultures women in fact have more power than it appears: superficially they have an 'inferior' status but in reality they have a very important role in decision making and organising.

2. The Gospel and the place of Women: It is affirmed that the Christian Gospel proclaims the essential equality of men and women. This is seen particularly in the life and teaching of Jesus. The church in the Pacific must take this seriously.

3. The Role of Theological Education: Culture and tradition are living things and the Gospel fulfils them. However they must not simply be maintained but rather must always be open to the challenge of the Gospel where it has practical implications for Pacific life.

The Church must commit itself not just to wait for change to happen, but actively to work for change in this area of women's place in society and the church.

Theological education has a particularly important role in this. Theological education should be organised so that it fulfils the task of equipping women to participate equally with men in church activities. The church should consider setting a certain quota of female staff and students in theological colleges, and in church councils, perhaps for a certain period only. However it was

pointed out that a percentage requirement may militate against real equality and the principle on which it is based.

When theological education is extended into the community, its content and method must take account of the needs of women.

DISCUSSION OF GROUP REPORTS

William Tokilala: In the United Church Theological College in Papua New Guinea we have trained women for ministry since 1960. They are now ordained ministers in the church. One has been a superintendent minister and now teaches at the theological college.

When we call a woman to preach the Good News it doesn't matter whether there is a stumbling-block or not, she has to preach the Good News anyway, whether the people like it or not.

Elia Taase: Our group wants to issue a call to be mindful and realistic about the inevitable changes taking place in the Pacific, re-evaluate the issues involved and be ready to revise our structures. We should however avoid an imposed uniformity. Each church has to work out what is meaningful in its own area.

Samuel Akle: I want to make five concrete recommendations to highlight points for discussion.

1. That theological colleges open their doors to women and men who are preparing for lay ministries as well as ordained ministry.
2. There should be active encouragement for women to study theology, including the provision of scholarships.
3. Courses in feminist theology should be provided and faculty to teach them provided.
4. An association of women in theology should be formed (as in South East Asia for example).
5. Long term preparation through Christian Education programmes should be provided.

Christian Education and Theological Education should take these issues seriously and women as well as men should have the freedom to decide what is important.

Lorine Tevi: The women of the Pacific should reflect on the content and the method of theology, especially the women at congregational levels.

Oka Fauolo: It sounds funny when we try to fight for equality when equality is already there in a different form. God knew very well before he created men and women not the same, that people would start exaggerating things. God will reveal in his own good time where the church should move next.

Elia Taase: Whatever recommendations we make should come from us, not from the WCC or South East Asia. Let the Spirit work among our Pacific Church leaders and let them come up with recommendations.

Puafitu Faaalo: From experience I have found out that women have a lot to contribute to the ministry of the church, and she is a most rightful partner to work with especially when we deal with the mission of the church.

Lopeti Taufa: The church should not frustrate any call or cry that comes to it. I don't want to just throw my own traditions and customs overboard, but if they need to be revised in the light of the Christian understanding of the gospel, I will have to revise my traditions and customs in the light of the Gospel. If we do not make provision for the theological education of women now we may be too late.

Tupuola Efi: My wife has rung me up and instructed me to come home. According to the tradition of a Samoan wife, my wife recognises that she holds inferior status. Superficially by traditions she may walk a few paces behind me and live in another house at the back which I am bound to provide, but in reality she wields a lot of power and authority. My mother, my wife and some other women have exerted great power in my life. Should this injustice be rectified?

Thank you for inviting me to address you and be with you.
Thank you for your patience in giving me a hearing.

PEACE AND JUSTICE

THE GOSPEL AND THE PACIFIC PEOPLES
STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

by Suliana Siwatibau

INTRODUCTION

Violence is ever present in our world as is evident in the news that our media brings to us each day. Guerilla wars, terrorism, racial clashes, religious killings, murders, political imprisonments and tortures and all forms of physical violence are constantly reported. The Pacific, in comparison to other parts of the world, seems to us to be so peaceful and free from strife. But we shall be dishonest if we declare it to be so.

Violence is manifested not only physically, but also mentally, psychologically and spiritually.

This short essay presents a layperson's interpretation of Christ's example and teachings with respect to violence and people's struggles for peace and justice.

Being no theologian by any measure, my interpretation of what the Gospel teaches will neither be penetrating nor exhaustive. This essay is however a sincere attempt to bring to your attention the cries of Pacific peoples. I am emboldened to do so because I believe the Gospel clearly lays the responsibility for action on these issues at the Christian's door.

THE CALL TO THE CHURCH AND CHRISTIANS

The WCC Vancouver Assembly Report of Issue Group VI stated that:

" The spiritual struggle of the Church must involve it in the struggles of the poor, the oppressed, the alienated and exiled. The Spirit is amongst struggling people. The Spirit kindles love and fills us with courage. The spirit imparts creative vision. Christ's Church celebrates the eucharist as the manifestation of God's love and as the source of spiritual strength among God's people (Ez. 37: 10; Rev. 11: 11)."

PACIFIC STRUGGLES

Popular people's movements emphasise different aspects of the same struggle for peace and justice in different parts of the Pacific.

In the Northern Pacific there is no peace. The loudest cry of Pacific island peoples there has to do with their struggles against the domination of an external powerful nation to whom these islands are vital for military and strategic purposes.

HAWAII

In Hawaii, the indigenous people have been almost completely wiped out. Now, with encouragement from other sympathetic groups, there is a revival of Hawaiian native consciousness, of their culture, traditions and identity. One of the important components of this awakening is the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (extended family) movement.

Kaho'olawe, now recognised as an important historic site, is sacred to the native Hawaiians, serving a key role in their ancient navigation for trips to Tahiti and Aotearoa. Kaho'olawe's declaration as a historic place has helped the revival of the native Hawaiian's traditional skills in crafts, house-construction and other resource exploitation technology.

Kaho'olawe however plays a key role in RIMPAC. This is a grouping of nations that border the Pacific (USA, AUSTRALIA, N.Z., CANADA, JAPAN) in an awesome military exercise that lasts one month and includes large masses of warships, submarines, air-craft carriers, military personnel, sailors and marines.

The climax of the exercise is the bombing of Kaho'olawe island. France joined the exercises in 1984. Protests to date have not stopped these exercises. Yet, if the bombing of Kaho'olawe is stopped, it will be a significant step forward in the demilitarisation of the Pacific.

Here we see the flagrant disregard for the rights and values of an indigenous minority in order that the war-making games of the mighty be played.

MICRONESIA

Across to the west lie the tiny islands of Micronesia at different stages of political association with the United States of America. Two of these islands were used for nuclear bomb tests in the forties and fifties. Another island continues today as a target for inter-continental ballistic missile tests. When this island was selected, some concern was expressed over the effects on the inhabitants. The then Secretary of State for the United States of America, later a Nobel Peace prize winner, is reputed to have said, "Who gives a damn? There are only 8000 people out there!"

Marshalls

This target island is Kwajalein atoll in the Marshalls group. The 8,000 people of Kwajalein had to leave their 735 acre atoll for the sixty-acre-treeless Ebeye atoll in order to make way for the US Military Centre and missile testing area. Ebeye is a "terrible slum" as admitted by a US ambassador himself. With no land to grow their own food, people depend so heavily on imported canned food. Nutrition is bad, and health facilities poor compared to that on Kwajalein for the military community, and social amenities dismal. Young people on Ebeye have one of the highest suicide rates in the world.

About four years ago, the land owners of Kwajalein staged a "sail in" at Kwajalein atoll in an attempt to stop the use of their island as a target for missiles fired all the way from Vandenberg air force base in California. They did not succeed. Their struggle continues to date.

Belau

A tiny nation of 14,000 people, Belau has courageously defied the mighty United States of America by upholding its nuclear-free constitution. Belau is the only country in the world to have a nuclear-free status assured in its constitution.

Belau is part of the US plan to establish a series of US Military bases stretching from Belau through Guam to Tinian as a "fallback" position should the corrupt Marcos regime fall and the US be forced to withdraw. Thus it frustrates US plans that Belau's constitution prevents the full establishment of US bases and military facilities in that country.

Belauans have had plenty of dollars from the US - mostly for food, beer and consumables. Little has been done to make them less dependent on US aid. The United States wants a price for its aid - the right to extend the air-field to accommodate large military aircraft; a large tract of 30,000 acres of jungle for military training; a further 565 acres and other sites for military and "defense" purposes. Most important of all the US wants the Belauans to abandon their nuclear-free status by changing their constitution, which was approved in 1980, and which requires a 75% vote for changes in its nuclear-free articles. The US cannot accept the democratically adopted nuclear-free constitution because it will limit its proposed military activities and use of Belau. Instead, the US has forced the Belauans to hold five referenda in five years to get them to abandon their constitution.

The alternative for Belau is to sign a compact of free association with the US government along with the Marshalls and the Federated States of Micronesia. Signing of the Compact will allow US use of Belau and Marshalls for military purposes for the next 50 years in return for greater aid grants.

WEST PAPUA

We hear so little of the struggles of the people of West Papua, usually known as Irian Jaya. Here the OPM (Free Papua Movement) continues to struggle for liberation and justice for the West Papua people. Their movement for independence from the extremely oppressive Indonesian regime needs support. The Vanuatu Pati in Vanuatu last year gave official recognition to the OPM as the legitimate representatives of the indigenous people of West Papua.

According to reports of foreign journalists who have visited West Papua, the people not only face the regular "death squad" that keep civilians in constant fear but also a massive Indonesian programme of transmigration.

It is reported that Indonesia plans to split West Papua into three provinces to be ruled under three "Military Commands". Inhabitants of Java, Madura and Bali will be resettled in an attempt to increase the population of West Papua to the extent that there will be three West Papuans to every one Papua New Guinea person. Thus an estimated 1,700,000 people, more than Fiji's total population, will be resettled in West Papua by 1989.

In this transmigration, the human and moral costs of moving people from their traditional homelands without their full knowledge of the implications is questionable. Further, the seizure of 1,700,000 acres of land from the West Papuans without compensation for use as transmigration settlements has only fostered the development of a strong anti-Indonesian sentiment amongst West Papuans.

Over the last several years there have been continuing sporadic conflicts and bloodshed between the OPM guerillas and the Indonesian troops. Hundreds of civilians constantly flock across the border to PNG in fear of Indonesian troops reprisals.

TIMOR

The bloodshed, the repressive military presence and the callous denial of indigenous people's cries for self determination occurs just as starkly in East Timor - another Indonesian colony.

A plea for the recognition of these people's struggles was made by the Melanesian Council of Churches in their "Statement of Concern" to the Decolonisation Seminar in Port Moresby on 4-6 March, 1985. The Statement said "The United Nations and its member States can forget about talking of Human Rights and Injustice issues so long as the West Papuan and East Timor issues are still current There is no true peace in the world when humans and their cultures are subjected to oppressive regimes or to being controlled by other countries just to serve a military or economic advantage over others."

NEW CALEDONIA

The Melanesian Council of Churches petition also included a plea for the recognition of the rights of the Kanaks of New Caledonia. Here are a people whose land has been alienated from them for the use of colonial settlers and who have through colonisation become minorities in their own country. It is fervently hoped that the current attempt by the French government to bring them closer to independence will not cause any further bloodshed. The main church of the Kanaks is resolved to lead its people through non-violent means in their struggle for recognition and full dignity as an independent nation. Unfortunately despite the progress, the French government has increased its military use of New Caledonia to include nuclear vessels.

FRENCH POLYNESIA

The French military and nuclear activities are even more pronounced in another of its Pacific territories - French Polynesia. Here the French have tested at least 106 nuclear bombs since 1966. The Americans, British and Soviets also tested bombs in the Pacific until 1963 when they moved their tests permanently out of the Pacific. The French still continue theirs, despite the accumulating evidence on the adverse health and environmental effects. Bengt Danielsson reported in a 1984 issue of AMBIO - a Swedish journal on environment matters - that the Polynesian Islanders had been promised that inspectors would circulate among the islands to check radiation levels, particularly in food items which would be banned immediately if radiation levels were found to be too high. No such inspectors were ever seen.

The only widely available scientific study we have is the report of a WHO-funded Japanese team who found that fish poisoning was extremely high in French Polynesia. In fact the reported cases were between 700 and 800 annually. This was higher than all the remaining islands south of the equator put together. The team showed also that fish poisoning only became a serious problem in French Polynesia after the nuclear tests began.

The French Polynesians, though not a minority in their own country, as the Kanaks of New Caledonia are, nevertheless are effectively second-class citizens in their homeland. In a dominant alien system of government and administration, they are handicapped politically, socially and economically. Further, the educational system alienates them from their own cultural heritage, as it trains them in how to cope in a French-dominated world.

DISCRIMINATION

People's struggles do not end with independence. In those countries which are independent, acts of injustice and violence may not be so obvious, they are nevertheless still widespread and insidious.

I shall highlight only a few examples from my own country, Fiji, where certainly there is no real peace.

Fiji's political, legal, social and economic systems still have in-built discrimination against specific racial groups, against women, and against those already under-privileged.

Fiji's electoral system and education policies specifically treat the racial groups differently and are devised to favour the weaker in order that they attain equal opportunities for participation in our society. This system needs continual monitoring in order that it not be exploited. On the other hand Fiji's social, legal and economic systems do not encourage equal participation of women who therefore are enmasse "left behind" in the development process.

Our social system is such that the already-privileged tend to have the edge over those under-privileged.

The Chiefly system for example gives more opportunities to those already privileged in the traditional society to be favoured in today's society. The richer members of society have more influence in decision-making because of the weight of their wealth. They have more say.

The commoners, the poor, the under-privileged have little say. Often they have no voice in the corridors of power. It is surely with them that Christ dwells daily as he illustrated in his parable in Matthew 26: 35-40.

The Vancouver Assembly report of Issue Group IV states: "Christians are called to resist any power that demands complicity in sin. Peoples are constantly tempted to misuse power. Therefore, justified by faith, the people struggle to affirm life"

To affirm life is to recognise not only every human soul's right to life but also the whole earth's right to life. Human beings are only a part of God's whole creation. Therefore, affirming life is doing so for all creation. This calls therefore for Christian Stewardship of creation, of nature, of the environment.

In its work for peace and justice the Church is to be concerned with the total development of the human society in its physical, social and cultural environment.

Any injustice against a human soul, any flagrant exploitation of God's creation, is violence against life.

Yet, it is the struggle for social justice which includes respect for the environment that is more difficult to define, and achieve. This struggle is that against exploitation of both the peoples and the environment, motivated by greed. The institutions concerned include both those within our shores and those beyond. These are what St Paul calls "principalities and powers" in his letter to the Ephesians 6: 11-17.

The challenge before the Church in the Pacific is a daunting one. To work for justice and peace for our peoples and to combat the powerful exploitive forces of this world in order to affirm life is no easy task. The solutions we search for are not clear. The very search for them however is a rewarding task in itself.

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SLIDE PRESENTATION AND PLENARY DISCUSSION

Two sets of slides were shown to the plenary session with introduction and commentary by Suliana Siwatibau. The first set of slides were produced by the Micronesia Support Committee and focussed on Micronesia. The second set focussed on East Timor and West Papua or Irian Jaya.

The following is a summary of Suliana's introduction and the plenary discussion that followed.

Suliana Siwatibau: I have learned from the Gospel that peace is more than just the absence of war. Peace cannot exist without justice and justice cannot exist where there is violence, and violence is more than just physical violence. Violence can be manifested mentally, psychologically and spiritually, and any denial of any of the basic human rights is violence. The basic human rights to any person or any groups of persons should include the right to worship, the right to practise their culture and traditions, the right to their native lands, the right to hold independent opinions and to express those opinions with freedom, the right to participate in making decisions for their own lives, the right to employment, the right to education and so on. The message that I believe the Gospel teaches us is that any denial of any of these basic human rights is violence against a person or a group of people in a community and therefore where that exists there is injustice, and where there is injustice there can be no peace.

Eteuale Lealofi: It is very obvious that there is great injustice in Micronesia, West Papua and East Timor and that the struggle of the oppressed needs support. But there has not been any mention of any involvement by a Christian Church. Could Suliana say something on that?

William Tokilala: Recently the church leaders from Indonesia and the Melanesian Council of Churches and the Australian Council of Churches have been together to talk about the situation in West Papua. The Melanesian Council of Churches has attempted to express their views in relation to the situation on the border. The Council has also tried to help people who are running away from the border. The Government is settling them in various parts and allowing these people to find employment. The Governments in Papua New Guinea and in Indonesia are trying to make some sort of compromise.

Lorine Tevi: The Roman Catholic Church is doing a lot in terms of helping the refugees of West Papua New Guinea. The Melanesian Council of Churches has a lot of money there that could be used for the refugees. Help is also available from the World Council of Churches.

At the recent Christian Conference of Asia Assembly the Youth Forum asked if we could feature a Pacific night where the Pacific Issues could be dealt with, particularly East Timor and Irian Jaya. But the Indonesian delegation, because of the very close relationship between the Church and the Government did not want the session

to be held until clarification was given on a certain point. It was a tense moment in the meeting. The positive point was that Assembly members were seeing that it was important for both points of view to be heard. The church as an institution and also the people of the church who are involved in the struggle, should be able to come onto a platform where they can exchange truth and information. The voice of the church needs to be heard. We are compelled to say what the church needs to say. At the same time we are trying to be careful with the church and state relationship if we want to work together. Here, in the East Timor and Irian Jaya situation, is a very timely example of where we can act together as a church and where we can work with the Government. Is there really a place where we have to compromise, or have we to clearly see our role and speak? Seeing it from the side of the world situation, West Papua and East Timor culturally are part of the Pacific. Because Asia is such a huge continent, I am afraid that these two islands of ours are often left on the fringe. We of the Pacific Task Force have tried to work with the Asia Task Force of the World Council so that they remember Irian Jaya and East Timor. I believe very much that the liberation of East Timor and West Papua will have to come from this side of the Pacific. If we are to take our role seriously we need to challenge our brothers and sisters on that side of Asia and that side of the Pacific to see the injustice that they are giving to these two different areas. I would hope that there would be many opportunities in the future where East Timorese and West Papuans will join Pacific meetings.

Suliana Siwatibau: The Melanesia Council of Churches did speak up in their presentation at the recent United Nations sponsored meeting, the Committee of 24 at Papua New Guinea, on behalf of the East Timor, West Papua and New Caledonian Independence Movements and also in East Timor the Catholic Church in Indonesia has tried to work very closely with the Catholic Church in East Timor.

Charles Forman: I might say a little about the concern of the American Churches for the Micronesian situation. For about ten years now the American Churches have been organised trying to do something to stop the American power in Micronesia and to allow for a freer expression of the people in Micronesia. They have worked, primarily through the National Council of Churches, and that body has organised a focus on Micronesia organisation in which it has involved not only churches but other interested American groups who are aware of what is going on in Micronesia. The Catholics have made available to this Focus on Micronesia coalition one person to work full-time all through the years on the problem to try to stir up awareness in the American Churches and in the American public about what has been going on. The churches have regularly sent deputations to make testimonies before Congress against American policy in Micronesia and calling for delay in the determination of the conditions of independence so that Micronesians may have more chance to think it over and get what they want. The American representative in Micronesia has tried to discredit the churches and has made attacks on their impartiality claiming that they don't know the facts there. So there has been a constant struggle between the American Churches and the American Government on this problem. Thus far it is clear that the American Government has won.

Sevati Tuwere: The Executive Committee of the Pacific Conference of Churches met up in the Marshalls last year and we met with the leaders of the church there, including the Roman Catholic church. Among the questions that we raised with them was the question about the relationship between Micronesia and the whole Pacific. The question was how do you see, in the last twenty or twenty-five years or so, the relationship between you and the rest of the Pacific? Do you think we down there in the South Pacific take you and the issues that are affecting you seriously? The answer came very loud and clear to us: "No. You people down there in the South Pacific are living as if we up here in Micronesia don't exist at all." I sometimes feel that we people down here in the South take ourselves too seriously as if we are the Pacific. I am talking about Fiji, Tonga and Samoa especially. We don't seem to see that there are other Pacific Islanders around, especially up there in Micronesia. A few of us went to Kwajalein when we were there last year in 1984, in the Marshalls and right to Ebeye Island. Now the people of Ebeye Island are originally from Kwajalein Atoll. Kwajalein is a big lovely beautiful atoll where they have the centre for Missile Testing. You can walk from one end to the other of Ebeye in less than 40 minutes, but there are now 8,000 people living on the island. We were very well received but we found for ourselves the stark realities of how the people on Ebeye Island faced up to the nuclear testing in the 1950s, and all the other associated problems of overcrowding and landlessness. I came back after that Executive Committee and said to myself, that I am really living in almost a false world when I find that when I talk about the Pacific I am in fact just talking about Fiji and really not moving beyond that. Are we just talking about our own island territories or are we seriously talking about the whole region including Micronesia?

Russell Chandran: What are the churches doing in relation to all these struggles? How far do the churches in the Pacific regard the peace and justice issue as a crucial issue in the proclamation of the gospel? How far is this issue part of the agenda of the churches when they meet as councils and synods, or is that a peripheral issue? How far are the theological colleges aware of the relation between the preaching of the Gospel and the peace and justice issue and include this as an important part of the theological curriculum in preparation of the candidates for the ministry? This is very important for the future of the mission of the churches in the Pacific area. The Peace and Justice issue has to come back to the centre of the interpretation of the gospel, and for that theological education has to play a role.

Samuel Akle: When you speak about peace and justice these are very important words in our society today. But these concerns must first start within our own churches, within our parishes. If the word of God that we want to proclaim all over the world does not start from within our churches and within our parishes then it does not make sense. This is why I want to ask the question of who is speaking about peace, who is speaking about justice and what type of relationship do we build within our churches. This is the main question to talk about before we talk about peace and justice.

Lopeti Taufa: Yesterday we talked about a type of theology that will probably emerge as the type of theology in the Pacific that is peculiar perhaps to an issue in the Pacific and we talked around a theology of celebration. Celebration seems to be a special concern of Samoa, Tonga, and Fiji and maybe of a few other groups

of islands in the Pacific. We know now from the presentation this afternoon that a big issue of Peace and Justice confronts a good many of our people in the Pacific. But it is not often on the agenda of our church meetings, nor a major concern of our theological institutions. We were concerned with the justice between the sexes this morning. The big bullies don't seem to regard the welfare of the small people seriously, if they regard them at all. Unfortunately what we hear from day to day and hour by hour is the injustices elsewhere in the world, but not injustices in the Pacific. I hope that the media will tell us much about what is happening in the Pacific in terms of peace and justice. I wish also that we would intensify our efforts through all channels available to us, including the PCC, and build up a right concern for this.

Lorine Tevi: Firstly, I am thankful that the issue of the whole Pacific is at hand. If we are to relate to one another then it is going to be expensive, because I think probably the time has come when we need Pacific islanders to visit one another and to see the real situation in each other's territories. In addition, if we are looking for the future then it is the young people being educated that need to be helped on this. For example students from the northern part of the Pacific could come here to do some of their education and vice versa with the young people from this side of the Pacific.

Secondly, I disagree with the statement that we should concentrate on church relationships first. I feel that both of them are very important. Our internal church relationships need to be geared towards reconciliation for justice within the church and at the same time face what is going on outside the church. This is so urgent that it needs the ecumenical attention. Justice and peace issues in Kanaky, East Timor and West Papua and the whole nuclear issue are questions that deal with foreign policies of our own countries. So the question comes back to us - I as a Fijian, what do I do in terms of helping my Government to decide its foreign policy, a foreign policy that will consider my position as a Christian for Fiji, for the region, and for the world as a whole? The challenge to us now is to study the issue and work with our governments so that the policies that are made go together with the light of the gospel we believe in. For example, it has to take Nigeria, not a Pacific country, to come in and ask the Kanak case to go into the Decolonisation Committee. That is because of the different positions that our Governments hold. But the government is us and the church has to play its role in that.

Suliana was then asked to explain the militarisation of the Pacific in terms of the whole world situation.

Suliana Siwatibau: Few people realise how important the Pacific is in military build up on the whole world military strategy. We hear a lot about the Nato countries and the military build up in the Nato areas but less of what is happening in the Pacific. As I said before we know more about what the U.S. is doing in the Pacific than what the USSR is doing. In the Pacific, both the superpowers are increasing the military build up.

The USSR has a big navy that has been increasing since Reagan came into power because of Reagan's more aggressive policy. The USSR Navy is more or less restricted in the Northern Pacific. It has a lot more in numbers in warships and submarines but most of them are less efficient than the U.S. ones and quite a lot of them are still diesel powered rather than nuclear powered, so they are not as fast. It seems from what the analysts say that the Russian Navy has only five or six narrow passages in which it could come out to the Pacific and it is therefore very easy for the U.S. to mine those passages and therefore contain the USSR Navy within the Northern Pacific and easily overcome it. On land the USSR's strategic bases are all within its borders. It has no strategic bases outside its borders. In the Northern Pacific it has bases around Vladivostok and nearby areas.

Now the U.S. has a much wider spread throughout the Pacific. Its greatest command centre is in Hawaii which until the mid-term of the Reagan administration commanded two thirds of the world's surface. That includes Asia, the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Since then the U.S. has increased its build up in the Indian Ocean and that has a different military command. The Island of Oahu in Hawaii has, they say, the highest concentration of nuclear bombs per acre of land in the world, and it seems that we do have almost two-thirds of the nuclear arms based in the Pacific. Guam is another centre where they have stored nuclear bombs. The Pacific still continues to be the centre for nuclear bomb tests. In the early 50s and 60s the United States and Britain had atmospheric tests in the Pacific. When they signed the agreement to go underground, they went off to their own countries, but the French have continued here. The Pacific has seen almost three hundred nuclear bomb tests up to date. So we are very important as a testing area for bombs that will not only be used here but also in Europe and worldwide. That is another important role we play in the nuclear arms race.

We are currently still being used for missile tests. To use the bombs they have to carry them in vessels which have missiles or aircraft. Inter-continental ballistic missiles can be based in America and shoot across to Russia or they can be based in Russia and shoot across to America or across to England. So they go long distances. In the Pacific, Kwajalein Atoll continues to be the target for missile tests from Vandenberg Airforce Base in California. Russia and China also use the Pacific for their missile tests.

We also have a grand build-up of conventional forces. We have nuclear submarines going around all over the Pacific. The latest most deadly and most devastating nuclear submarines patrol in the Pacific. In conventional as well as nuclear build-up we have what they call the Rimpac exercises that take place outside Hawaii.

Suliana Siwatibau: I propose three questions for group discussion:

1. How should the church in the Pacific work to inform itself of acts of injustice within the Pacific?
I think the church does not yet have an effective network. So how should the church organise in order to be able to get this information to inform itself of what is going on in the Pacific?

2. *What direction does the gospel give to the Pacific churches to act in situations of violence and injustice? Once you have learned about what is going on, what directions does the gospel give you for action? What priorities does the gospel give you for action?*
3. *How effective can a national Church be on issues of regional and world significance? eg. can churches influence the foreign policies of their governments?*

GROUP REPORTS

GROUP I:

1. How do we keep abreast of the facts?
 - (a) *By means of the materials circulated by the Commission of Peace and Justice of the Uniting Church of Australia.*
 - (b) *By means of the PCC, its publications and newsletters, hand-out leaflets related to particular crises, and through its conferences and meetings.*
 - (c) *Local churches, conferences, synods, ecumenical bodies, regional bodies and national councils of churches should voice their opinions on these issues and share them with others.*
2. How do we act effectively?
 - (a) *By a united voice of Pacific churches towards the South Pacific Forum.*
 - (b) *By working through the churches in France and Indonesia, and asking them to put pressure on their governments.*
 - (c) *Through prayer God can do more than the nuclear powers. PCC should set aside an intercession day or week.*
 - (d) *The church should support the actions of individuals or small groups who risk their lives for the cause of justice and peace.*
 - (e) *The church should keep up with the small voice and not give up.*

GROUP II:

1. Sharing information.

(a) By working through existing networks of information, e.g. SPATS use of the satellite for theological discussion of issues.

(b) The Pacific Journal of Theology and similar publications should facilitate the collecting of materials and educating the people as well as being a vehicle sharing actions and reactions.

2. Gospel Directions for the Churches.

(a) We affirm the prophetic role of the churches.

(b) Particular instances of injustice should be interpreted in the light of the Gospel.

(c) The church should be engaged in protest by way of street marches and demonstrations.

(d) Some individuals in our communities have the ability to speak out on certain issues. They should be encouraged.

3. How effective can the local or national church be?

In Papua New Guinea there was an instance when a local village congregation was aware of a case of injustice. The local congregation informed the national church and the national church would then inform the Council of Churches and PCC to make it an issue of wider concern.

GROUP III:

1. Sharing information:

(a) It was agreed that there was a general lack of knowledge on Pacific issues at the local church level and among ordinary church members.

(b) The PCC News was potentially a useful medium for disseminating news on Pacific issues. The views of local people as well as facts should be supplied to PCC News regularly. PCC News however was limited in that it did not reach many grass roots people. Also since it is a quarterly publication its news could often be quite stale by the time it reached its readers.

(c) Some churches such as the Roman Catholic Church have an effective method of getting an issue through to all church members by way of encyclicals or pastoral letters sent out from time to time on the world or national level, to be read to all churches on a given Sunday. This could be used more widely.

(d) The Sunday sermon is an important way of addressing both local and regional issues of justice and peace.

2. Gospel Values.

(a) Leaders, political and otherwise, often feel they are fighting a lonely battle against the major powers on matters of justice. They need to experience the solidarity and support of brother nations and sister churches.

(b) Christians are concerned both for immediate small injustices in personal and community relationships, as well as global social and political concerns. This dimension should be emphasised in the use of the Bible, how we understand the church, and the manner in which Christian doctrine is presented. We are reminded of the care we are called to have for the whole creation. In other words, our approach to issues of justice and peace should be holistic.

3. Suggestions for Action.

(a) Theological Colleges should become familiar with Pacific issues and study the Gospel in view of this struggle.

(b) Christian Education curricula should enable children and adults to experience the ongoing story of God's justice and love by using contemporary stories as well as old.

(c) Church leaders often experience difficulty in confronting political leaders over local issues of injustice for personal or social reasons e.g. church leaders being golf partners of political leaders and overseas ambassadors. But there are ways of speaking out effectively against injustices without becoming politically involved by the timeliness of the statement and the appropriateness of its mode e.g. by emphasising human dignity, human rights, the dangers of manipulation in such a way that those concerned get the message.

GROUP IV:

1. Sharing Information.

There is a lack of a mechanism to feed information into the local church as well as to enable the local church to write and inform others of their situation.

2. Gospel Imperatives.

The background paper entitled He began from Galilee and He is Here now is a theological reflection on the importance of the sea. The sea and the land are God's creation and we the people of the Pacific must affirm that it is good. Life is meant to be lived in the goodness and righteousness of God. When we appreciate creation and see it in its wholeness we will see the meaning of what is meant by being from the Pacific.

Sea and land are the livelihood of Pacific people. When our livelihood is disturbed, living becomes troublesome - life is threatened and the "image of God" is being defaced. This defacing becomes contrary to the will of God and this is sin. We must

take courage and take a militant stand against the evils of the Pacific. We are reminded of the God who says, "Fear not". Let us go forward in the combat of injustice. Theology is not only to serve in the sanctuary confined by the four walls of a building but it must be speaking to the condition of our everyday life. The one condition is that of suffering.

3. Proposals for Action.

(a) PCC should appoint a full time person to gather information and inform the region on these issues.

(b) National Councils of Churches should be encouraged to set up commissions on church and society.

(c) This Consultation should make a concrete study and form a proposal to be sent to the coming meeting of the South Pacific Forum voicing our concern for the wholeness of the Pacific and the issue of peace and justice now.

PLENARY DISCUSSION ON GROUP REPORTS

Puafitu Faaalo: Nuclear issues and the proposed nuclear test ban treaty are issues that concern us in the Pacific. I strongly support the idea that these issues that we have discussed should be raised at the Forum Meeting in August and presented to the big powers who are involved in nuclear activities in the Pacific.

Lorine Tevi: The Australian proposal for a nuclear-free zone does not ban the ships, aeroplanes and missiles which carry nuclear weapons; does not ban the command, control and surveillance systems that make fighting with nuclear weapons possible; does not ban the passage of nuclear weapons through the Pacific; does not ban the dumping of nuclear waste; and so will make the writing and signing of a better treaty very very difficult. The proposed treaty does not achieve what we are fighting for. We need to take this to the Forum and also go back home and work with our own churches and governments. The time is short.

Sevati Twere: A small concerned group in Auckland have sent an alternative treaty. This should be distributed. But it does not fully talk about the five-point proposal by the Australian Government. It is a very important document for us and for our future.

PROPOSED AND CARRIED: That a small committee consisting of Ilaitia Sevati Tuwere and Suliana Siwatibau (with power to coopt) prepare a draft statement on behalf of the consultation and report back.

NOTE: *See Conference Recommendations (B) for a copy of the resolution and the copy of the letter that was sent (p. 148-149).*

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN THE PACIFIC

[Prepared by the Faculty of the Pacific Regional Seminary]

Presented by Gabriele Daunivucu

In the South Pacific Consultation on Theological Education, Papauta 1978, in Western Samoa, two papers were presented on spiritual formation: one by Fr John Broadbent, the other by Rev Siatua Leuluaialii. The one by Fr John Broadbent outlined the historical perspective of Catholic spiritual formation for priests as it was done in Seminaries from the 16th century and how this formation did not help in the Pacific because of its cultural and philosophical assumptions (individualistic and monastically based) which were quite different from those lived out in the Pacific (communal celebration of the present world). The paper by Rev Siatua Leuluaialii presented a practical formation programme as it was carried out at Piula College. The responses to these papers expressed (1) the need to look beyond the practicalities to more general principles that can be implemented elsewhere; (2) the need for balance between the academic and spiritual formation in theological colleges. In this paper, some attempt will be made at underlining the general principles of spiritual formation - what is its necessity; its specificity in the Pacific; its pre-requisites; its content. The balance between academic and spiritual formation is seen here not as a matter of weighing one against the other as if they were two different and, perhaps, even opposing elements, but as aspects of the one and the same experience where the personal involvement with God in Christ is central. It is the aim of spiritual formation to initiate, deepen and nourish this personal involvement with God in a conscious and deliberate manner. It is the aim of academics to articulate, systematise and consider further implications of this involvement for ministerial service in the Church on a scientific and pastoral level. But what do we mean by spiritual formation?

A WORKING DESCRIPTION OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Spiritual formation is not something ghostly and, as it were, illusive and, thus unreal; something eerie and detached from life; something merely "supernatural", tucked away for church and nothing to do with life in the plantation, or in the office, or in the kitchen, or in the factory.....

Spiritual formation evidently has to do with spirituality which, in the words of one Jesuit priest, (1) is a "Christian way of life which allows the Lord easy entry into my own daily life as it is, and which makes it easier, not harder, for me to offer him my heart in return in that daily life as it is". According to another Jesuit priest, (2) spirituality has to do with faith meaning, that is, with making sense out of reality in such a way that it animates and draws forth from us a response that integrates and gathers our life together into a harmonious and unified whole, illuminating

and interpreting our relationships not only with God the Creator but also to the world of Creatures. Spirituality, in other words, is, for us Christians, a personal option for Christ, in the light of which option - and our subsequent drives and strivings to be more and more one with Christ - we view the world and our life choices. Spiritual formation, then, is a means of helping realise this spirituality in the life of any particular individual who is, or wants to be, Christian. It is, in its broad outlines, a process not unlike the process of socialisation in the growing up process within the context of any society. By means of it, the person being formed is brought first towards making his option for Christ; then to a deepening and nourishing of that option in a continuing and ongoing manner.

In the light of what we have just said, we now offer the following description as a working concept of spiritual formation. Spiritual formation is the ongoing process of initiating and forming a person to develop a living and loving relationship with Christ, so that in Christ, he may come to a constant experiential awareness of God's loving design for all his creatures, and more particularly of the part that he is invited to play in that design. I say that it is an ongoing process because spiritual formation does not begin only at the theological school nor does it end there. (This must be well understood). The initiation of the person to a conscious relationship with God in Christ should be part of the normal upbringing of any Christian child, long before entering a theological school, though this can not be taken for granted. At any rate, this, like the other phases of the formation process is ongoing as the person grows up and enters into the various phases of his development. In other words, he has to be initiated into new modes of relating to Christ; he has to learn to live and love in new ways as he goes through the various stages of his life journey. In this relationship with Christ, the person comes to an experiential consciousness of God's loving design for his creatures. Spiritual formation aims at making the person constantly aware of living in God's presence all the time and to respond to Him in an appropriate manner. This awareness then is not just an intellectual comprehension, but one which evokes a response of love, of adoration, of praise, of thanksgiving, of repentance because this awareness is one of being involved in God's creative love, without which nothing can exist for even one instant. This awareness also makes the person realise that he is not just a selfish and passive recipient of goodness, but that he, like a dam receiving water, is part of the means whereby this goodness can be shared out to others. In the light of this awareness, he would want to learn ways and means whereby he can be effective in playing his part; he wants to discern, to choose, to accept, to reject, in the light of his awareness. He would want to be articulate in telling others about his experience. He would want to know how he could dispose himself so as to be available to God whenever and however God comes to him or wants him for a certain purpose.

NECESSITY OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Spiritual formation, then, can be seen not as something esoteric for a few special chosen elite, but a necessity for all who wish to be Christians not just in name but in reality. A Christian

who has never been initiated into a living and loving relationship with Christ; who has never experienced the love of God in a concrete fashion; who has never really attempted to live in constant awareness of being in God's presence; who hasn't tried to bring his life choices into line with his relationship with Christ, can hardly be called a living Christian. Spiritual formation in short, is the bringing to life of a Christian.

Now if spiritual formation is needed for all the ordinary run-of-the-mill Christians, how much more so for those who are normally called Christian leaders: those, in other words, who profess to make it their business to bring people to God and God to people?⁽³⁾ Hence, the utter necessity of spiritual formation in the formation of the future minister. In fact, all other aspects of the theological formation of the minister stand or fall according as it is based on a rock foundation of a solid spiritual formation or on the sandy foundation of a pseudo-intellectualism. The Biblical and historical yardsticks mentioned by Dr Havea in the Papauta 1978 Consultation should serve to confirm or correct the personal experience of God, while the "relevancy" yardstick is really nothing but the articulation of that experience in its socio-historical context.

What we have said so far on spirituality and spiritual formation applies anywhere in the Christian world at any time of its history, but the title of the paper we are concerned with at the moment is "Spiritual Formation in the Pacific". The question we must face, then, is whether the Christian spiritual formation in the Pacific is any different from Christian spiritual formation in any other part of the world, prescinding for the moment from the time element. In other words, are there any specifics in which the same basic Christian spirituality is manifested differently in, say, Western Europe/North America, Eastern Europe/Russia, Latin America/Africa, Oceania.....? To answer this question, I would refer to what has already been said in the PAPAUTA 1978 Consultation in Western Samoa.

THE SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN THE PACIFIC

In his paper on a view of the Church in the Pacific,⁽⁴⁾ Bishop P Finau mentions that the Pacific people share in the joys and sorrows of the men of our age: in the struggle for political and economic independence; in the problems of migration, urbanisation, and land-tenures; in the pros and cons of tourism; in the growing awareness and concern for youth and women; in the concern to curtail population growth. But he also mentions some elements which seem to me to be quite specific to the Pacific as, for instance, the two-pronged thrust of "our island nations asserting their identities" while at the same time "coming together to build unity" in regional cooperation. In this context, Bishop Finau stressed ecumenism and development as Church concerns. He also mentioned our cultures and national traditions - those "seeds of the Word" - as particular ways in which God is speaking to us in the Pacific. As examples of cultural and traditional elements he cited the kava ceremony and the leadership of the extended family.

Following Bishop Finau's paper is Dr S 'A Havea's paper on "The Pacific and Theology in World Perspective." (5) There, Dr Havea says the following:

"One of our problems in the Churches in the Pacific is the FOREIGNNESS of the Gospel to the people..... Personally, I have been troubled by thinking that the Gospel is a "second-hand" message, because it was relayed and handed over by missionaries. I wanted to think that the Gospel was a first-hand message, original and warm, straight from the lips of Jesus..... I have tried to overcome this "foreignness" by making myself believe that the effectiveness of the Good News was SIMULTANEOUS.....

The Good News was already "there" and missionaries only communicated the already present message to them. They were uncovering to the mission fields what was rooted in the native soil and thus made people aware of its already presence.

So the Gospel became effective and accepted because it was growing out of the Native Soil. Therefore the Gospel became known and had grown out of the local culture.

..... we hold in the Pacific certain qualities that the world is starting to look back to us because they have completely lost them. The simplicity of our Christian faith; the total dependence in the moving and saving power of the Holy Spirit; the love and respect of elderly folks, the hospitality of the community of the poor - these qualities can hardly be found today in the world."

In both these papers, specific elements are mentioned as quite peculiar to the Pacific. There are specific needs and specific values which necessarily influence the way a Pacific person conceives of his relationships, the way he organises his world including the way he regards himself. These, then are the specifics that need to be taken into consideration when we speak of spirituality and spiritual formation in the Pacific.

Let's take some specific examples. When we speak of God as Father, what intellectual content would this concept "father" have for a Pacific listener? What emotional responses and attitudinal stance would it evoke? If we are to take as given what Bishop Finau and Dr Havea have said, then God would be seen either as a strict disciplinarian or a simplistic solver of problems. He would be seen either as someone to whom we give in order to receive back much more in return, or someone who is pleased with us when we're good, and who doesn't like us very much when we're bad. When we say "love" in this context, what would our Pacific listener feel? Would he feel it's a tit for tat exchange where we have to earn being accepted, or a kind of licentiousness where it doesn't really matter what we do? When we say "faith" or "prayer", is it just a yea, yea, yea, praise the Lord? Or is it a do-or-die doggedness or fulfilling one's responsibilities and duties? When we say that the minister is a Church/community leader?..... These are questions and many similar ones in the context of the Pacific which have to be answered by one who is involved in spiritual formation, so that he may be more effective in helping realise in another that kind of Christian way of life

which allows the Lord easy entry into his life.....

THE ELEMENTS OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION

It is now time to say something more on formation and how we understand the term here. When we form something material, we use pressures and stresses, twists and turns, either on the whole mass or on specific points of the material to be formed so that the form we wish to impose on it may take shape. In spiritual formation we are dealing not with a material mass but with a human-divine relationship, that is, the relationship between God and one of his human creatures. In this kind of formation, three persons are involved: God, the human person to be formed (formand) and the human person who is to animate the formation (formateur). The basic attitude in this tripartite inter-relationship is one of respect. God certainly respects the human persons, and there's no need to elaborate on the respect which the person to be formed and the person animating the formation should have towards God. We need to say something, however, on the relationship between the formand and the formateur.

(1) Mutual respect is a "sine qua non" of this relationship. On the part of the formand, the respect is based on his trust and confidence in the formateur to help him to be what he is called/meant to be in God's design. On the part of the formateur, the respect is based on his conviction that he is privileged to be involved in the mystery of another person at the most basic roots of his personality - his relationship to his Creator - and on the conviction that the real formateur is God himself and that he, the human agent, is only a friend or companion who helps the formand discern what God is saying and doing in him.

(2) It is taken for granted, of course, that the formateur has already had himself an experience of God and has acquired some first hand knowledge of the ways of God with the soul.

(3) Further, the attitudes of genuineness and sincerity, of openness and honesty are necessary prerequisites for the relationship between the formand and the formateur. If they are only play-acting they would accomplish nothing but self-deception.

(4) The interaction of the three persons involved in formation does not take place in a vacuum. The environment has a lot to contribute, and this is where the theological college or Seminary has a big role to play.

Spiritual formation should be central in the theological formation in the sense that the best theology is done on one's knees. The God-talk of Scriptures and theology, as well as the demands of morality, make no sense, except as interesting bits of information and philosophical "sequiturs", unless they deeply influence a person's inner world of meaning; that is to say, unless they penetrate the complex inner drives and attitudes which organise a person's world. Theological formation should animate and draw forth from the person a response that integrates and gathers his life together into a harmonious and unified whole. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the teachers to try and

resonate through their teachings, the inner experience which they themselves have had of God so that the student can identify his own experience in a prayerful and personal reflection.

Spiritual formation should be central in the organisation of the Rule of Life and the order of discipline, so that an atmosphere for prayer and for fostering genuineness and sincerity is created. The students must understand that they are responsible for themselves as well as for each other, as they help or hinder each other in their growing "knowledge" of God. They, together with the formateurs, are co-responsible for the creation of an atmosphere conducive to spiritual formation.

Having said so much, it would still be difficult for me to say what a spiritual formation programme should contain, except that it should be conducive to human growth - a general enough statement. However, it has to be said that spiritual growth goes hand in hand with genuine human growth. The person grows towards wholeness or integration or individuation through a series of decisions or elections in the midst of many possibilities in view of a life goal or basic option. Put it another way, we have been made in the image and likeness of God which needs to be cultivated towards maturity through the exercise of our God-given freedom, until we become the glory of God by being fully alive. In terms of Christian spirituality and spiritual formation as we have described them, the programme should be conducive to the person coming to an intimate experiential knowledge of Christ, making his own identification with Christ his basic option, and growing towards the full realisation of that option by a series of decisions that go towards making it a reality. However this is done in the practical details, this is the thrust of any spiritual formation programme. The stages are making a basic option for Christ, integration of life through a series of personal decisions in line with the basic option, thus preparing the ground for God's action of wholeness through the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity, the end of Spiritual growth.

Here follows the way we at PRS put these elements into practice.

General Overview of PRS' Formation Programme

PRS trains candidates for the Roman Catholic priesthood to work in the fourteen dioceses of CEPAC. Its student roll has stabilised at 110-120 in recent years. The course extends over seven years.

The thrust of the programme is towards a gradual discovery of self, the student's situation in this world, his spiritual life, how others have searched for truth, to lead up to the fullness of revelation in Christ. After a study of the theology and Scriptures concerning Christ, he goes on to study how Christ's Body was projected in time and space in His Mystical Body by looking at the development of the Church in History and how by reflection on the deposit of Faith she grew in understanding of her doctrine, moral norms and her own mission.

In order to test the theory of what he has learnt, to apply the pastoral principles he has been practising in a limited and observed situation and also to review his own vocation, the seminarian returns to his own diocese or region for a pastoral year at the end of his fourth year. Contact is kept with the seminary through local Diocesan Pastoral Coordinators. On his return, he finishes his programme with increasing practical experience.

Approach to Spiritual Formation

The general approach to Spiritual Formation is a holistic one, endeavouring to promote integral growth of all dimensions of the Christian person: Personal/spiritual, social, academic. The emphasis is on the person rather than the product. The aim is to form reflective and responsible persons rather than persons who mostly react or conform; to develop the facility to theologise, while learning theology.

Our holistic approach has also a wider meaning. It entails that spiritual formation is not and cannot be limited to some specific activities. We list these activities below but they are meant to be like power points allowing the dimension of spirituality to energise the whole formation of young men to become ministers in Jesus' spirit. Spiritual formation is a dimension of academic and intellectual formation, of pastoral training, of communal and recreational life. Continuous effort must be made to prevent spiritual formation from becoming a separate compartment of piety without real influence on the rest of formation or without being influenced by it. We must also be aware of the danger that a student's morality is in contradiction to his participation in a programme of spiritual formation. We must help him to see such a contradiction and come to a decision about his present life and future. Apart from its specific role, spiritual formation has also by its very nature the role of integrating the other dimensions into a personal wholeness for the individual as well as for the community.

To enable integration to take place, PRS affords the following spiritual experiences:

- a) Morning and Evening Prayer in common.
- b) Daily Eucharist.
- c) Daily personal prayer (meditation).
- d) Living out the liturgical seasons, as the setting for community celebrations.
- e) Regular use of Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- f) Close interaction in small groups (8-12) selected at the beginning of the year, who live in close proximity, sharing the Eucharist and common prayer two days a week and weekly discussion sessions. Each group has a staff member as moderator, who interviews the members on a regular basis.
- g) Spiritual conference by rector to student body fortnightly, clarifying aspects of PRS vision.

- h) Class weekends away from the seminary at least once a semester, for workshops on prayer, journalising, evaluation, etc.
- i) A day of recollection (generally on a Sunday) for the whole student body, every second month.
- j) Annual week-long retreats in class groups away from PRS. Some are preached in common; more often they are directed on a one to one basis.
- k) Regular meeting sessions of national groups, to reflect on the group's local church and the candidates' future role of leadership and servanthood in it.
- l) Spiritual Direction. Each student chooses a spiritual director from among the staff, who acts as an accompanier on his journey in faith, and to whom he goes for spiritual guidance at least monthly.
- m) Intensive Spirituality Experience. First Year students undergo a six weeks' intensive spirituality experience (ISE) away from the seminary in the second half of the first semester. The purpose is to help the beginning student to come to a knowledge of himself, become more aware of his vocational motivation and acquire a more realistic appreciation of his gifts as well as blockages to growth and ministry.

The major component is a thorough psychological testing, leading to an evaluation of the student's capability for priestly ministry, conducted and analysed by a professional psychologist who is also a Roman Catholic religious. Other topics include: areas of human development, community building, personal and liturgical prayer.

NEW ORIENTATIONS

1. Proposed Foundation Year

The current Curriculum Review being conducted at PRS includes all facets of the training programme. Already in planning is a foundation year for new entrants commencing 1986. This will concentrate mainly on learning and human skills, to equip the student for the following years of academic study.

Its first aim is to help a student to know and accept himself and his socio-cultural roots in a critical but positive way. It will help him distinguish and retain values in himself, his social background and values which are Christian or can be Christianised, and discard those which contradict Christian values. While there will be some academic input, most time will be spent on the following learning experiences:

- a) - How to pray
- How to reflect
- How to think critically

- b) Practical ways of
 - Philosophising
 - Scripturising
 - Pacificising
 leading later to theologising, etc.
- c) Exposure to the "Big Ideas" of subject areas of the seminary academic programme.
- d) Developing human skills
 - Systematic thinking skills
 - Learning skills
 - Study skills
 - Personal organisational skills
 - Decision making skills (discernment, responsible judgement)
 - Communication skills
 - Relational skills.

The main purpose of all these experiences is to enable the student to be reflective and responsible, to be at home in prayer and to live in brotherhood. Armed with these 'tools' he should be in a position to enter into the following five years of academic study confidently and effectively. It is the foundation to the rest of his seminary life and his life as a diocesan priest.

2. Cultural Learning

In conjunction with the move towards a foundation year, a programme is being designed for an eight-week summer course on cultural studies for first and second year students during their long end of year home holiday. This would involve a research of their own culture along anthropological lines, not so much a classical research as a simple exercise of perception and observation of various aspects of their culture. It would mean, in the words of Bishop Claver, a review team member, the students "going to the old people who are bearers of the culture, and sitting at their feet in order to learn. This would establish a habit that they should retain throughout their lives". PRS students have a greater need than most, since they spend most of six years out of their cultural milieu. On the other hand, having been exposed to another culture, they are in an advantageous position to review their own culture. It is a process of "owning" their own culture consciously.

The impact of such a period of cultural learning in the spiritual formation of a student could be considerable. It could help him to build up a more Pacific awareness and attitude by experiencing how older Christians in his country live, pray, work and think. Though he has to reflect on this experience and his own reactions with his personal counsellor/director it will give him at least concrete and more realistic examples of living with Christ, in his own culture.

NOTES

1. David Townsend, "The Parish, A School of Prayer", Unitape 288.
2. Michael Ivens, "Introductory Lecture to Principles of Spirituality", Saint Beuno's 3 M Course, April 1985.
3. John Foliaki, "All Embracing", pp 69-70.
4. Bishop P Finau, "View of the Church in the Pacific" in Papauta 1978, p. 57ff.
5. Dr S 'Amanaki Havea, "The Pacific and Theology in World Perspective" in Papauta 1978, pp 63ff.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

Gabriele Daunivucu: Students who come to college should know how to pray in their own languages. The College should also see that there is opportunity for them to pray.

Larry Hannan: The first thing that we do when a new student comes into the seminary is to affirm him in his own basic spirituality as he has experience of God now. One retains one's unique basic experience of praying and relating to God. So the first step is to affirm him in the goodness of what he is doing. Then he needs to be led into other ways by exposing him to other methods that have been found valid down the centuries through scripture and tradition. For example, through the use of Psalms and scripture for the whole dimension of communal prayer as well as personal prayer. Through the discipline of the Daily Office and the use of the Psalms prayer life is developed over the years and when he is ready he can be challenged by other forms of prayer.

Etuale Lealofi: Relating in prayer is like relating in love. We can't really teach anybody how to love somebody else. So we can't really teach anybody else how to relate to God in prayer, but we can offer them various ways which have been traditionally found helpful - the Ignatian method for example. Then the student will find his own level of how to pray, especially how to pray the scriptures, how to meditate on the individual level. We also have liturgical prayer, the common prayer of the hours, and the eucharist. I think we in the Pacific find common prayer more natural. Individual meditation or reflection has to be introduced to our students.

Samuel Akle: In September 1984 we had a very important meeting in Rome about spiritual formation in education. In Europe both the institutional churches and the media are obstacles to this kind of spirituality. What are the main obstacles in Pacific societies which are against the development of a better society? What do the students going through PRS say are their main difficulties in learning to pray?

Larry Hannan: Like any other human situation PRS has plenty of problems, but that should not stop us from having our ideals and our goals. Our first problem with incoming students is the problem of screening. A good number of them are immature when they come and have personal problems which really should have been solved at home. The proposed foundation year is basically to make the most of the initial enthusiasm by building on the common vision that that first year group has as a body. So in that first year they should experience some forms of leadership, develop the ability to think out their own lives and also challenge motivation. A basic motivational problem is influenced by the cultural situation of status seeking. These young first year men often think that what they should try to do is to give answers to their people back home, whereas their real job is to listen and find the right question. Our intention is that they go home as learners at the end of their first year. At what stage in a student's life can you bring about metanoia, the coming of the spark inside the heart to change him from being a self centred person, to transcend his selfishness and self centredness and to become an "other centred" person?

Larry Hannan: Video is a big problem coming to the Pacific. It can take over families. We need to implement the 'theology of enough' discussed in Bishop Taylor's beautiful book The In Between God - when to have enough kava or enough video - to use it and not let it control you. We can be passive in receiving so much and the higher a student goes the more this attitude can develop. So the student waits for the day when he is ordained and then he becomes the boss around the place. This is a constant problem we have to face. It is with that in mind that we intend that the first year be a training in basic human skills and human living enabling students to reflect on who they are to build a sense of awe, a sense of reverence, a sense of wonder of life around, and to be able to reflect and to think critically. Young men who are trained in the French educational system learn to think more critically than those from other countries. It is not our experience that makes us grow, it is the experience as reflected on, and this is where philosophising comes in. It broadens the horizons of thinking, opens up new ways of thinking, and nurtures the creative thinking of new concepts.

William Tokilala: Can you explain the phrase "the emphasis is on the person rather than the product"?

Larry Hannan: It is not so much on the amount of intellectual knowledge that he acquires and the amount of academic assignments he can produce, but what does the doing do to him in the process? The emphasis is on the process and the finding ways of enabling him to grow as a person, to grow in self awareness and self confidence. Is he converting himself, evangelising himself, or is he waiting to go out and evangelise others? Is he the object as well as the subject of his learning?

Charles Forman: Is there a particular Pacific spirituality which can be developed and from which the rest of the world can learn? I noticed that Father Etuale spoke about the fact that students tend to be strong on communal or group spirituality and weak on individual spirituality and therefore our task is to develop them on the individual side. One could take a different attitude and say that we need to build on their strength. In other words don't try to develop the individual side but develop the communal side where they are strong and perhaps from that there will appear something that the rest of the world has not known and which will be the particular contribution of the Pacific.

Russell Chandran: Spiritual formation is an important dimension of theological education and equipping people for ministry. There are different traditions of spiritual formation. The Catholic, the Orthodox, the Quaker, the Protestant. Quite a number of the colleges have a protestant background. We cannot assume that they have neglected spiritual formation. I know having visited some of the islands of the Pacific that there are strong traditions which had been brought by the Congregational church, the London Missionary Society, the Methodists and so on which are maintained still. How far are these being taken seriously for spiritual formation of the candidate? It would be good if there is some sharing of information so that there will be mutual enrichment, mutual correction and some affirmation for the ongoing programme of spiritual formation in theological education.

Etuale Lealofi: I think we can develop community life, but purify it also by balancing it with developing the individual aspect. Not that we want to immitate or ape other cultures but we would like to see a kind of balance being brought here.

Sevati Tuwere: As I look back on my student days a lot of emphasis was put on the academic side with little emphasis or good direction on the side of spirituality. The paper is a serious invitation to combine the two and combine them strongly, and to take up the intellectual exercise as very much part of spirituality and spirituality as very much part of the intellectual exercise. The words of John Mott come to me again: "Pray as if there is no such thing as organisation, and organise as if there is no such thing as prayer".

When students get to PTC they get into a new situation where they are faced with other students and other traditions. They are in an ecumenical situation where the spirituality back home has got to be reconsidered and reorganised again. A former student said that he did not think that he found God at PTC. That was quite an interesting comment whether we agree with it or not. In the ecumenical situation at PTC where the students are brought from their various backgrounds and traditions, they are faced with a new situation in a foreign land where we continue to struggle right now with the kind of spirituality that has got to be allowed to be born in this situation.

Bruce Deverell: Most people have stressed the communal nature of Pacific experience and spirituality but there is much in Pacific people's experience which involves a personal meditating way of looking out to the world. Some images come to mind: The lonely fisherman by himself on the ocean or diving into the depths; or the pastor, especially older pastors, sitting in their houses when everyone else is working or doing things. There could be much more going on when this sitting takes place than we normally assume. It could become a more disciplined form of meditation and prayer, bringing together the various things going on in the village and the people's lives in the form of prayer. Then again in every one of Albert Wendt's novels there is an unusual eccentric sort of person who is deeply in touch with the past, open to what is going on in the present, who maintains a unique individuality together with a strong sense of the coherence of all things. Simone Weil, the French mystic, wrote something about the relationship between academic work and prayer. She said that in both academic work and prayer you need to pay attention to reality. The discipline of paying attention in academic work is deeply related to the disciplined attention of prayer.

Ming-Ya Tu'uholoaki: We presuppose that the students' devotional life is private and that the school is not concerned with that. In the Methodist theological college at Davuilevu we do not have a subject in the area of spiritual formation. In pastoral care and counselling we cover so much about the importance of communication and dialogue but we don't have a personal conversation with God in a very disciplined style of dialogue. There is therefore a gap between my academic pursuit and my very deep pursuit of my relationship with my God. The Methodist Theological students feel confused by the Pentecostal movement. We need a form of spiritual formation that is deeper and more

*basic to day-to-day life and leading to a disciplined life.
Where do we stand in relation to our personal devotional life?
What guidelines can we give for helping our own congregations?*

Welepane Wanir: Two years ago we started a programme of spirituality in our theological school. We asked the students, especially the student families, to share a moment of devotion in each family, and also to have an hour on one special day when the whole community of Bethanie would be able to have a common devotion. On Saturday nights we have a workshop where students will try to use some new ways of celebration and worship. As a result the students were more spiritual, more alive and active in class work. We also asked the parish of Chepenehe, which is beside the school, to organise some worship where students could share and participate. This led to a kind of renewal in the life of the parish. It is very important not to separate academic courses from spirituality.

Teriitua Faehau: In our school we have community worship every morning and every evening, and a workshop on Saturday nights, but we lack what we call personal prayer. We are always asking families to try to be more individualistic in some prayers, but it is difficult to see how to help them. We cannot control spirituality. We lack this individual spirituality and thus a close personal relationship with God.

NOTE: Spirituality and Culture

Dr Geoffrey Wainwright, who was visiting Fiji, was invited to present a paper entitled Christian Spirituality and the Surrounding Culture. He put forward five alternative ways in which Christian spirituality relates to the people in their culture, based on Richard Niebuhr's five models in Christ and Culture.

Dr Wainwright will be publishing the full text of the paper elsewhere. A summary of the main points is given below.

In the Christ against culture model, Christian spirituality takes the form of escape from the world.

The Christ of Culture model implies an affirmation of forms of spirituality experienced in the prevailing culture of the time.

The Christ above culture model implies an infusion of divine life within existing cultural forms so that they come to perfection in Christ.

Christ and culture in paradox suggests a struggle and conflict type of spirituality.

Christ as transformer of culture recognises the reality of this world but calls for a radical change or transformation of the individual and society.

COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATING THE GOSPEL IN THE PACIFIC TODAY

By Seru Verebalavu

Preamble

Nowhere in the world is communication more difficult than in the South Pacific.

Some six and a half million people are scattered across 64 million square miles (100 million square kms) of ocean representing almost one third of the surface of the globe.

The political and economic structures have been adapted from British, French and American models.

The Ocean between the islands and the mountains within have given rise to a multitude of local cultures owned by small population groups. The world with which these groups could effectively communicate was little more than the valley in which they lived or the island shore which they inhabited.

Yet what communication lacked in expansion it gained in intensity. Oral communication on the tribal level had all the richness of a neatly-structured, closely-knit community life.

Given the continued dependence on oral communication, the island societies are more receptive but also potentially more vulnerable to the electronic media.

The printed word does not provide an alternative perspective to radio and television, either because the press is non-existent or irrelevant to the rural people or because it is carrying the same message as the state-owned radio stations. The answer to this does not only lie in more meaningful broadcasting but also in the creation of a rural press.

Equally urgent are the needs for lateral communication in the South Pacific Islands. Colonialism has made the islands part of communication systems which have their centres outside the region, in France, Britain and the USA. Thus communication tends to flow in and out of the Pacific but not much among the Pacific Islands.

The philosophy of the "Pacific Way of Life" is now gathering momentum as a common cultural denominator among Pacific Islands, even though we speak hundreds of different languages including English (British and American) and French.

These commonly shared "Pacific values" can, to a large extent, be identified with Christian values.

We now have a new thinking along that line called "Pacific Theology" which is the reason why we are here today.

Indeed, the South Pacific is a Christian continent. The Christian Churches on the islands now carry an almost unprecedented measure of responsibility for the integral human development of the people and for a Pacific way of communication in particular.

Why Mass Media?

Christians in the Pacific Islands today are voices crying in the wilderness of concrete and plastic, full of people looking the other way. Somehow in the confusion of the contemporary world, Christianity must be seen as calling for passionate devotion. Christ must be seen as a man-God, worth following. And to do this it will be impossible for Christians to avoid using the techniques of mass media.

But using the word "avoid" betrays the Christian churches' anxiety about mass media and their lack of ease in the electronic world of impulse and message.

One reason why the Pacific Churches are nervous about mass media is that they do not understand how they operate, how influential they are (they would rather not know) and how they can be used for spiritual reasons.

It is essential to get to know what mass media are and how they function.

In the first place, mass media are any means used to get hold of an audience and give them a message. The purpose may be entertainment, propaganda, information, stimulation or even merely time-consumption.

Although we mostly think in terms of radio, newspapers and television, mass media must include advertising, closed circuit television, billboards, direct mail, and even church bulletins and parish papers.

The list is longer, because you could include correspondence courses, phone-in programmes, counselling, music, and even church services. So it becomes immediately evident that our Pacific churches are already using some mass media. What they need to do is to broaden their horizons and start using some of the other means of reaching the masses.

Electronic Technology:

Electronic Technology is reshaping and restructuring patterns of social inter-dependence and every aspect of our personal life. It is forcing us to reconsider and re-evaluate practically every thought, every action and every institution formerly taken for granted.

Everything is changing: you, your family, your neighbourhood, your job, your education, your government, your relations to others, and they are changing dramatically.

At the same time we must keep in mind that mass media facilitate a technology and value-pattern which is foreign to any

form of traditional lifestyle.

We now live in a global village where privacy and private guilt have long since vanished, where catastrophes around the world are brought into our living room by television/video, newspapers and radio.

Radio:

Let us begin by asking this question, "What is radio like?" Radio is a hot medium that supplies the ear with very little information and leaves the rest to the listener's imagination.

Radio affects most people intimately, person to person, offering a world of communication between the speaker (or the copywriter) and the listener.

It can reach a large number of people in different situations, women at home, men in the garden or out fishing, salesmen and even young people on the beach.

Needless to say it is essential for Christians to get into the radio medium, and the best way to penetrate is for individual Christians to get into the medium professionally.

We need people of Christian convictions, with or without close ties to the mainline denominations, to enter the medium as panel operators, technicians, journalists, script-writers and producers.

Their purpose would not be to intrude their Christian ideas into air time so much as to be Christians, maintaining high ethical standards and generally influencing the whole field of broadcasting.

The second service the churches ought to be maintaining is a public relations and information service to the media, and through the media to the public.

There has been an extraordinary hang-up in the churches about public relations, as though it was less than honest and slightly dubious.

I am sorry to say that it is a common practice here in the Pacific for churches to keep their affairs secret and closed from public viewing.

I believe that it is healthy for the churches to have exposure; it brings Christian ideas into the light for public scrutiny, thus bringing the Gospel into public view.

Radio is the most effective medium in the Pacific today, and it is surprising to discover that many of our churches have not taken any serious step to use it effectively.

The second question I would like to raise is: "Are church services good radio?"

For a minority the answer probably is that a limited broadcasting of church services meets the need of people who cannot get to church because of illness and hospitalisation.

But, it must be faced that a church service as such is not good radio. In a way it is like television because a service is a spectacle, and there is a sense in which the Minister is carrying out the lead in a liturgical drama.

For radio, with its intimate, personal, fireside atmosphere, is more suited to the cross fire of opinions than the authoritative sermon in the content of formal worship.

The church will need to be flexible in the way it packages its message, and will need to remember that when it does get around to long term planning in this field, it must retain flexibility to meet this constant change in taste and style.

It has been proved overseas that a short commercial-style announcement of 30, 45 or 60 seconds would be more effective than any longer religious programme.

I am sure that this will come as a shock to most church people who feel, with their preachers, that if a sermon does not take 20 minutes it isn't worth saying. It is time for some hard, direct-hitting brief messages, for instant impact, leaving a thought that stays in the mind.

Other types of programmes should include capsule type dramas, church news segments, discussions and devotional programmes. Our churches here in the Pacific are very fortunate because most of our governments give us free radio time. We should then do our best to make the best use of these opportunities to the fullest extent.

As Christians and theologians in the Pacific today we just cannot afford to be left any further behind in the communication process than we are now.

A few quick facts will show just how far behind we are at present:

- * There is not a single Christian press in the Pacific Islands today that can rightly claim that it is doing well.
- * Our Christian bookshops in the Pacific today are poor witnesses to the Gospel.
- * Our religious radio programmes are so poorly prepared that they are boring and confusing to many.
- * In the video invasion presently experienced in the Pacific, not a single Christian video distribution centre can be found in Fiji or the Eastern Pacific.
- * Our church papers are so poorly produced that they have become an embarrassment to the Christian faith.

Press:

Most of us here in the Pacific still think that what is printed in newspapers is true (there is a strange paradox here for many of us say both "You can't believe what you read in the papers")

and also "I don't remember where I read it, but I know it's true.")

The cultural gap between many (perhaps most) Christians and the "rest" shows up seriously in this field of mass media and outreach. For we continually misunderstand how people are thinking because we make serious mistakes about what they are reading.

We have also failed to appreciate the social implications of the media.

The mass media should be evaluated primarily in terms of their social function.

Every church needs forms of communication with the necessary power and flexibility both to establish its sense of social awareness and to reinforce kingdom values to its members and beyond.

Local Church bulletins and parish papers:

These unfortunately are regarded as a write-off by many people. Their style and layout has been bad because they are done usually by a clergyman untrained in this field.

However, from what I have seen here in the Pacific, even cheap and nasty printing jobs have had some good material in them, applying the Bible relevantly to life. If only their style and format could have been made more presentable to the public the effect would have been different.

It is true here in the Pacific that virtually everyone is touched by the news and views which appear in print.

As on radio and television, the Christian person will deplore in print a tendency towards encouraging experimentation outside marriage, the concept that marriage is a trial only, and any debasing of family life. It will be important that the Christian person does not appear only negative for there are positive virtues and positive attitudes to one's body and appearance that are helpful, healthy and psychologically sound.

The magazine field is neglected as an opportunity for Christian witness here in the Pacific.

We as Christians must adopt a style in our publications that matches the spirit of the age, bringing the Christian message to bear upon it, in a relevant and attractive fashion.

How can we Promote the Gospel in the Print World?

- * By a continuous stream of news and information supplied through church information agencies.
 - * Feature articles and news supplied by churches to local, national and international newspapers, magazines etc.
- Christians need to be trained in how to write suitable copy, what items to select, how to write an appropriate feature

article on a personality, or a social issue in a way which makes it attractive to the editor.

- * Do not overlook items from local, or our rural churches. They are often very active and some of them will be of use to others if shared and presented in a good way.

Internal Communication for Church people. Most churches here in the Pacific are attempting to produce or have already tried some kind of a monthly or weekly magazine.

This is a good way of informing the already committed about what is happening on the wider front. This enables the possibility of coordinated approaches on all kinds of issues, in the confidence that locals appreciate what is going on and how they can assist.

Unfortunately many are never read by enough church people. Others have pulled out to conserve cash.

There is no easy answer here. It needs constant communication to the local level to help people understand the importance of being informed about the wider work of the church and the relevance of the Gospel to the age we live in.

Given this privilege and opportunity, churches should realise the social possibilities of media in education, in community standards and in economic change, so Christians will appreciate the broadest possible effects and potential of the mass media.

As Christians in the Pacific today we have no special protective armour that will keep off the evil beat of the television signal or the mental impressions of the transistor. We are just as shaped by what we see and hear as anyone else.

To what purpose then will Pacific Christians use free radio time to promote Kingdom values?

Do we still want to engage in a slight updating of the old fashioned way of presenting the message?

I believe the Christian message must be made simple and shown to be relevant to our people today, especially the young.

We should try and present God as someone who is alive today, and whose son Jesus can enter a person's human experience and transform it with new motives and attitudes.

The Christian conviction is that the God of Jesus Christ is already at work in his creation. Hence the World of Communication is his theatre of operations.

I believe we, as Pacific Christians, should look upon media as something useful to man and his communities and should encourage our churches to mould and use them according to that purpose.

The good news that Christ has been given dominion over all things makes it possible to work for these things with courage, determination and a sense of humour.

So the media are tools of mission, neutral and not evil tools which the Christians may use to explain Christianity to the world at large and to individuals in particular.

Churches using mass media should have three main objectives:

A. TO INFORM PEOPLE

The media can be used to inform people about what it is like to belong to a denomination, what is happening in outreach and what it means to belong to a local congregation. This will have the effect of pre-evangelism, removing barriers and prejudice with a view to creating a readiness to hear and understand the Gospel of Christ.

We also need to inform people about the social welfare work and other activities being carried out by church agencies in institutions, services and counselling with a view to public use and support for these services.

If only we can get the public to appreciate how much voluntary work is being done by church agencies, we would remove a lot of prejudice about what the churches exist for, and what it is doing.

Another aim will be to inform church members of their role in the communicating process. This is a necessary step before many of the other objectives can be achieved, so that the total personal resources of the church can be mobilised.

After all, if we are not communicating with one another within the church how can we expect to communicate with people outside?

In my view it is a mistake to think in terms of evangelism as the only reason for using mass media.

The business of informing people about what the church is doing will occupy a great deal of time and effort, and is a very important part of the communications task.

B. TO EVANGELISE PEOPLE

As the church becomes more aware of the widening gulf between it and the rest of the community, we will have to turn more and more to the mass media as instruments of reaching the general public with the message of genuine Christianity.

The content of our Message will be the personal relationship with God which is revealed in the Bible, and in summary, it should include the concept of Jesus as Lord of the World, moral standards by which we should live and a responsibility to God and man for which we are accountable.

It is essential to come to grips with a Biblical message which is appropriate for the sort of generation which exists today, a generation which has grown up outside the influence of the Christian church, and which does not have a solid foundation for moral or spiritual ideals. It is more and more a pagan situation.

A perceptive look at the preaching of the apostles Paul and Peter to pagan audiences has revealed how far off target much evangelistic preaching has been, and how important it is to get back to Bible content and methods in preaching today. This will apply as much to preaching through mass media, in whatever form, as to preaching in the pulpit.

In communicating the Gospel through the media, our primary objective should be to lead people to drop their prejudices and barriers against Christianity, to become aware of the real content of the message and become interested. This interest, we would hope, would lead to commitment, that is, to a conversion to personal faith in Christ, and to a commitment of membership in a local church.

* Will Radio and Television Produce Conversions?

It can be categorically stated that only God's spirit troubling an individual can produce repentance and faith which eventually leads to conversion and a personal experience of Jesus. This happens sometimes in quite an isolated situation but more often the individual has been subject to a faithful explanation of the Bible and a sympathetic fellowship of Christian people.

The sermon does not convert, the Holy Spirit does. Likewise, the electronics of radio and television does not convert but the Spirit may use the message a person sees and hears.

It is also possible for the church to engage in both direct and indirect evangelism, as well as information giving.

C. INFLUENCE COMMUNITY THINKING

A third important objective in the churches use of the media will be to inform and influence the community towards adoption of Christian views on issues and aspects of Biblical truth.

Where an official body has made a decision of attitude on a particular issue, this should also be communicated. The church should also attempt to share in national and local policy-making.

If Christian penetration of the mass media is to have any lasting impression and especially if our ultimate aim is that people experience living for themselves, it must end up with person-to-person confrontation.

Christianity is not just a philosophy of life to be generally commended, it is a living personal experience which comes with a greater force when it is personally recommended, especially by a friend.

Surveys that have been taken of the means by which people have been converted to Christianity, point to such person-to-person contact as the most common and the most successful.

So a media use that is not connected with the local church will have some effect, but will not be nearly as effective as the personal penetration that could be achieved if it was supported at the local level.

This means that it is important that church members not only know and understand what is happening in the church's media programmes, but also that they can capitalise on it and follow up any referrals.

Pacific churches need to get away from the idea that mass media are somehow a magic way of reaching a large number of people without local churches doing anything. They are not magic.

They will accomplish little without the active participation by local churches in liaison and follow-up.

At the end of the line there must be the priest or the church member, courteously calling at the door, entering into honest dialogue, assuring the enquirer of a warm welcome with the local Christians, and explaining by word-of-mouth what a personal experience of Christianity really means. One cannot underestimate the value of personal evangelism!

We must believe that the message is the message. The content of our declaration, or our commercial, or broadcast service, or documentary, does indeed matter a great deal.

For indeed handling the Word of God, His revelation of himself to men is summed up in the life and mission of Jesus Christ. And men are not so blind or so confused by the media that they cannot hear and understand this message if relevantly presented.

We need to do much more than just massage man's conscience a little; we want to offer him forgiveness in Christ's name, and to help him adjust permanent God-given principles to this changing world in a way that will give him faith in the present and hope for the future.

Cassette Ministry:

Transistor radios and cassette players are very common in the Pacific today and we should learn how to use them to our advantage, in getting the message out. They are very cheap to buy and cheap and easy to record.

We can use them for recording Bible study material for playing in private, and in church discussion groups. There is a whole field of opportunity here, waiting to be taken up.

Electronic Video Recording:

Pioneered in Japan and the United States in the early 70's these are being used now in developed and in many developing countries.

I have no doubt in my mind that this is going to come to the Pacific in a few years. Perhaps it is time that Pacific churches need to start preparing for these now.

Slide/Sound Sets:

These can also be effectively used for the purpose of Christian education. They used to be regarded as "kid stuff" useful for illustrating talks for children but fortunately they are now seen as modern educational aids for adults. Greater use of them in church services would assist in the positive education of church people and can feature well in evangelism.

Group Media:

This includes drama, theatre, puppet shows and other related areas, and are new to the Pacific.

From what I know of the Pacific situation only the churches in Papua New Guinea are trying these new media out in the form of mobile puppet shows.

Direct Mail Evangelism:

While advertisers in the secular world have been using direct mail approaches to get business from the public for several years, the Christian churches have been spectators from the sideline.

Here are suggestions for evangelism using direct mail:

- * Select from the Electoral Roll or Telephone directory or other reliable sources a particular kind of person you wish to evangelise, like teachers, doctors, business people, working wives etc.
- * Write, using the local church letterhead, a letter (not in duplicated form) from the pastor or rector or priest, introducing your church, and just a simple word about the Christian faith. Do not stress an invitation to come to church. Allow for the fact that the person may be already a committed church member and tell them to ignore the letter if they are. You must not sheep-steal.
- * Two weeks later, write a second letter, enclosing a Gospel. A slightly stronger letter about the relevance of Christianity to the pressures of daily life is appropriate.
- * A final letter, two weeks later, with a fuller introduction to church life, expressing a willingness for the pastor/rector/priest to call and discuss the Christian faith personally, but only if they invite him.

Such direct mail campaign aimed at people who as far as you know are not churchgoers would cost little but could result in who knows what?

Correspondence Courses:

This is proving very successful in many overseas countries like New Zealand and Australia. I believe our churches here in the Pacific can try this out on the local level especially in Christian education and Bible training. If only our pastors will realise fully how busy many of our people are during the day and how hard it is to leave home for a meeting once you have arrived tired at the end of a long and hard day of work.

Church Services:

I will stick my neck out and say that the church has become the last bastion of conservatism in the Pacific today and that it reacts very slowly to any suggestion that the time-honoured method of communication - the preacher in his pulpit with the occasional visit of the President/Bishop in full gear - is long overdue for a change.

So let's have a look at this first method of communication the church always uses.

For those who regularly attend church services: What do they really learn?

How committed are they really?

Do they personally commit themselves to Jesus Christ?

A look at the New Testament reveals that preaching was a perfectly natural, spontaneous method used to spread the Good News about Christ and his significance for men's lives. It is hard to find a single occasion when a docile audience sits to hear a prepared message. Rather the apostles spoke out when opportunities arose, relating their message to the people of their day and to some current mood of thinking or event.

They spoke to hostile audiences, but very seldom to captive audiences.

When people responded they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayers (Acts 2:24).

So people in churches were not fed on a diet of sermons, they encountered the teaching in the context of fellowship.

The problem with the Pacific churches today, from what I have seen and experienced, is that some priests/ministers think that they have a direct pipe-line to God and that they alone can interpret God's will for the people.

This is a betrayal of the New Testament concept of a Minister, and restricts the congregation's expression of the gifts of the Spirit which they have been given.

The Minister, like a playing-coach, should be encouraging his people, by his teaching and shepherding, to upbuild each other mutually in their discipleship.

No wonder unstructured and informal gatherings of Christian people are flourishing, and, by contrast, the institutional church appears to be gradually dying. We have not really started to learn the lesson that a church service is a big opportunity for mass communication, fellowship and sharing.

From this base, communications of Christian Faith ought to be spreading out through individual people engaging in dialogue either informally when they bump into people, or in a planned way with prearranged Bible study or dialogue evenings or prayer meetings. The Minister will engage in personal counselling, Christians will talk with their neighbours and help them if they are in need, and they will be on the watch for particular needs in the community which are overlooked and where they can help.

Conclusion:

Mass Communication Media are basically skills and techniques to be mastered in the pursuit of the ultimate goal of explaining to every man, woman and child on the face of the Pacific Islands and the world how Jesus Christ's mission to the earth was accomplished, and what it can bear in their own lives in terms of personal experiences and in terms of community influence.

The media possess no magic power to convert people to Christianity; that is the sole prerogative of God's Spirit already abroad in the world. They are merely vehicles for communicating the message, but they are powerful vehicles.

Finally, do the Pacific Churches have a Gospel to offer to their peoples? Do we really care about this message enough to have a good look at Mass Communication to get it across to the mass audiences?

I believe we do. We have a message that converts into a living relationship with Jesus Christ, and that in turn issues in an attitude to life that is relevant, concerned and compassionate.

And I believe the Pacific churches need the will to act, the coordination to move together, and the techniques to adapt Mass Communication to their message and Mission.

Mr Chairman, invited Guests and Participants, I pray that God's guidance be with you all.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

Oka Fauolo: I am grateful for this paper. I agree with everything that is said, but I feel that the weakness is the same old lack of activity among us. I don't believe it is so much the matter of the churches disbelieving the value of the mass media as just the lack of action.

The other thing is the need for more personnel. When people are asked to give something for printing it is not given because the people from whom the material is needed are busy people.

Ming-Ya Tu'uholoaki: This paper supplies us with a lot of information, as well as addressing the need to face reality and the social change that affects our Christian life. Firstly we ministers need to pay attention to the purpose of the sermon in relation to its quality and length. When we deliver the sermon we are engaging in dialogue. If, when we deliver the sermon, we realise that we are engaging in dialogue with the congregation, it will no longer be a lifeless speech but a fellowship in a person to person context. Secondly the 'spontaneous method' mentioned in the paper is based on New Testament practice. There are two examples of this in Fijian society. One is the kava drinking gathering with people sitting around talking for hours. Kava drinking is really a circle where we can see each other and there is face to face meeting at the personal level. It is however for men. The women are busy in the kitchen cooking and preparing food. The spontaneous method challenges us to reach these women's groups who are kitchen members.

Chris Walker: The experience of western countries has been that the media have not been good at direct evangelism, but they are obviously very important in terms of pre-evangelism by making people realise that the church is there and is important.

Oka Fauolo: To say is to believe and to do is to know. We in our more conservative churches do not have open air evangelistic services like the smaller sects such as the Seventh Day Adventists and the Jehovah's Witnesses. People are drawn to the music when they play the guitar and they go away feeling nice but there is no conversion. Nevertheless it is worth trying.

Sevati Twere: In most of our Protestant Churches in the Pacific the sermon is central to most of our services. It should be seen as part of the total context of worship, it should not be unnecessarily long, it should be meaningful, well prepared and part of the total elements of the worship service.

We need to hear more about the situation of Christian bookshops in the Pacific, how they are going and how influential they can be in the life of the churches.

Seru Verebalavu: The two main objectives of Church bookshops are to provide the church people and the public with good Christian reading materials and reference books and so on. They also are a way of getting money for the communications area. Generally

speaking church bookshops tend to float with the waves. When it gets rough they go under, and the next year when the waves smooth down they get on top again. On the whole they tend to be poorly managed so they become a poor witness. Bookshops provide a good witness even for non-Christians. So our Bookshops must be the best. They must be clean, the staff must know how to welcome customers, the lay-out must be attractive, and so on.

Samuel Akle: The problem of communication was one of the main themes of the last council of CEVAA in Paris. The problem of communication is important and CEVAA has a lot to share.

Ralph Teinaore: Communication is something that we have to work at in the Pacific in order to be more meaningful in our service of the word of God. If we really want to work at communication we must get the finance, personnel and other means in order to develop communications. One example of our failure here is the difficulties our interpreters have had here at this conference!

In Seru's paper communication is (a) to inform people and (b) to evangelise or pre-evangelise people. I would put evangelism first and inform after. There is a danger in just informing people. The mass media can be used as a way of showing off the best things that are happening in the church. But that doesn't work well for the church. Communication for me is more than communicating information. It must lead to communion with others. This is where we stand as Christians. If we are able to just make people think about what they have heard, what they have received from us, then we have achieved some kind of communion.

Bishop Bryce: The church in Tahiti is very good in one means of communication, that is television, and so if there are any other churches who would like to learn more about how to work with television it is the church in Tahiti that we should refer to.

Charles Forman: Are there other parts of the world where the situation is more encouraging and from which the Pacific could well learn?

Seru Verebalavu: Two percent of the population of Asia are Christians and yet what they are doing is impressive.

Bruce Deverell: Our concern at this consultation is Theological Education and what we are actually doing in our theological schools. Does this paper suggest any changes of emphasis in our curricula? We tend to assume in theological schools that the forms of communication basic to the life of our churches include different forms of oral communication in worship and preaching, in pastoral ministry, in meetings and teaching as well as symbolical forms associated with our liturgies. The paper implies that these are no longer as effective as before and we need to try out new ways. What does all this mean for theological education?

Ming-Ya Tu'uholoaki: In Fiji there is a late night programme with music and a message. You feel that the speaker is talking to you personally, like two persons in a conversation. This is perhaps a good model for the rest of the Pacific.

Sam Sahayam: The sermon has been criticised for being too long. But the sermon meets the needs of different people in different ways when you expound the scriptures. More time should be spent on preaching in theological colleges. The sermon should be criticised in the college and also in the parish where students do their practical work.

In the Pacific area, especially when you go around the bookshops, most books are from overseas. Could there be a course in theological colleges to train our future theologians how to write books?

Ralph Teinaore: Most of the churches are using government radio and TV stations. What is the relationship between the government and the churches? Does the government give freedom to the churches to say whatever they want to say on radio or TV? Our church in Tahiti is not really free to say what they want to say. We are asked, "Please don't say something about nuclear testing or other controversial issues". But we Christians always ask the government, "What do you mean? How can you tell us how to communicate theology or talk about the Gospel?"

William Tokilala: In our theological college we have a full-time man who is responsible for lay training, especially getting out books to lay people who are willing to do a correspondence course. Our lecturers have written books in the past, especially simple introduction to theology, church history and other topics to help lay leaders to understand the basics. We are willing to share these books with other theological schools and churches.

Bishop Bryce: Professor Ron Crocombe has encouraged a lot of Pacific Islanders to write and we now have many books on the Pacific available through the Institute of Pacific Studies of the University of the South Pacific. More Christians should be encouraged to write theology and stories from a Pacific perspective.

Faitala Talapusi: The papers at this consultation have given us a lot to think about, and need to be taken in the context of each situation. It is also true that the Pacific is still oral in tradition and society and people prefer to speak rather than write and listen rather than read. In some countries, the church has a central place in the community and people go to church to listen. They often like to listen to older ministers rather than young ones. Usually the older ones have the art of oratory, an art we must try not to forget. The older ministers also use legends, myths and relate such themes to the gospel, and even the young ones will lift their hands to them.

Another thing the paper does not bring out clearly is that the most effective communicator is life itself - the way we live. This is the 'liturgy after the liturgy'.

GROUP REPORTS

GROUP I:

1. South Pacific Regional Communications Resource Centre.

The group proposes that a South Pacific Regional Communications Resource Centre be set up for the purpose of research and training in the use of the media at both the local and regional level. The existing centre in Tahiti needs to be developed and used more widely. WACC is asked to appoint a person with overall responsibility for this development. Training courses at theological schools should be included in its terms of reference.

2. Theological Bookshop

Although there are a number of bookshops whose aim is to distribute Christian literature, there is an urgent need for a bookshop which exists specifically to make theological literature available. The group proposes that steps should be taken in close consultation with Seru Verebalavu and Kevin Engel, consultant for the Australian Christian Literature Society, to set up a modest distribution centre, possibly on the PTC campus, as a first step. Eventually proper personnel would need to be trained and a full theological bookshop developed. The bookshop would serve the specialist needs for textbooks and library books of PRS and PTC, as well as the requirements of ministers and priests, theological students, and interested laymen and women. Such a bookshop could also act as a distribution centre for all of the Islands, especially their theological schools and colleges.

3. Homiletics and the Media

The weekly sermon, preached to the local congregation, reaches relatively few, whereas the radio, the press, television and satellite communication may reach millions. While the modern media may be used for widespread dissemination of information, the sermon remains an important part of the church's ministry and should be seen as an integral part of the whole act of worship. It is therefore important that homiletics be given a proper place in the curriculum of each theological college. College sermons should be subject to critical analysis in the homiletics class, and sermons preached in congregations need to be evaluated. Specialist training is needed for children's talks, use of audio-visuals and other forms of communication. Local schools especially should seek to relate to established traditions of oratory in local cultures wherever possible.

4. The Theological College as Communicator of the Gospel

The theological college itself proclaims the gospel in the context where it is placed by the quality of its community life and the way it orders its affairs. Various traditions take different views in the role which the chapel plays in this. Is the theological college an academic institution which turns aside from time to time for worship? Or is it a worshipping community in which the mind is trained theologically in order that it too might be offered up in worship to God? The group asks the consultation to give critical reflection on the nature of theological education with a view to resolving this problem.

GROUP II:

1. The continuing importance of the sermon.

This is still a very fruitful means of communication in the Pacific, especially in the rural situation. We need to build on this and continually seek to improve the established homiletical practices. Sometimes there is a problem in that young ministers have not reached the required standard in the vernacular.

2. Other oral communication.

We should build on the strength of these modes in our societies. Communication through tapes has very great potential, though we need to watch that theological quality is maintained. The traditional modes of communication are still very much alive, and these should be carefully studied and utilised. Communication of the Gospel is the responsibility of all God's people, not just the preachers.

3. Use of the mass media.

Radio must be used effectively. Different groups in the Church (women, youth, men) could be used for broadcasts (this experiment worked well in New Caledonia).

4. Training in communication as part of theological studies.

This is needed, both at basic and specialised level. Modern methods of communication should be taught, but it was suggested that persons skilled in the traditional modes of communication could also be drawn in to provide training.

GROUP III:

1. Courses in Christian Education and Communication.

Courses in Communication and Christian Education should be compulsory in theological schools.

2. Traditional and modern forms of communication.

The study of communication is first of all a study of what is being communicated. The 'how question' is a secondary question relating to the media used, methods and techniques. Methods and techniques are not so much found in books but rather in the actual situation and culture of the people involved in the act of communication. For example, the Ma'ohi people of Polynesia are people of oral tradition where image and gesture are of great importance. In this situation oral preaching and television are more suitable means of communication than books and radio.

3. Approaches to Teaching Communication

In theological education it seems best to introduce students to general principles first to awaken interest and make students aware of the issues involved. At Hermon in Tahiti the aim of the introductory course is to show how communication works and train students to know what they want to communicate and how to communicate it in a general way. Specialisation comes only when a person is ready for it and needs it. At PRS the purpose is initially to

awaken interest in the students to communicate needs and opportunities by introducing theory first of all and then giving students practical projects to work on.

Not only special courses in communication to expose students to communication principles and methods. Courses in hermeneutics, worship and Christian Education have an explicit communication component related to different forms of ministries. Different models of teaching (not just the lecture) used in the classroom can demonstrate different forms of communication, while the practice of writing essays is an example of a communication skill being developed. More imagination is needed for development of the art of communication in all aspects of theological education.

GROUP IV:

1. The Sermon is unsubstitutable.

We wish to affirm and assert our belief in the fact that the sermon is unsubstitutable by any other means of communication - from personal contacts through discussion groups to outreaches and the electronic mass media. It is the central act of the worship service. We recognise however, that the churches should take seriously the use of the mass media as supplementary means of communicating the Gospel message. We also recognise that the sermon may be abused at times when the ministers use it as a forum for expounding personal philosophies rather than the word of God.

2. The Place of Mass Media

The importance of the mass media and other means of communicating the Gospel message is recognised, as we have the obligation to use every available means of human communication in the service of the Word of God. Massmedia is very much part and parcel of our present day culture. However, we should recognise that the media have their own language and we must learn that language if we are to exploit these media to their optimum value. This is where theological education plays an important part.

3. Priorities in Theological Education

The theological students should be made aware of other ways of communicating the Gospel message other than the Sermon, making them realise that these other means are neither substitutes nor even alternatives, but supplementary.

Having understood this basic truth, they should be taught how to use these other means - the written word (arrangement and layout), the audio-visuals, drama and other means.

Finally we are in full agreement that the best way we can communicate the Gospel to others is for us to live it.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE REGION

by Charles Forman

I would like to remind you that this Consultation stands within a long history of theological consultations. We had a Consultation on Theological Education in the Pacific in 1968, another one in 1975, and more recently at Papauta in Western Samoa in 1978. The last consultation was at the Pacific Conference of Churches Assembly in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, in 1981. So there is a long background to what we are doing here today. More specifically the proposals for a two part approach to Theological Education in the Pacific were developed by the Pacific Theological College and the Pacific Conference of Churches in 1984 and 1985. The first part of the proposal was to survey the actual facts and situations of Theological Education in the Pacific Islands. This survey was carried out in 1985 by Russell Chandran, Sevati Tuwere, and myself. The second part of the proposal is this consultation where the recommendations of the survey are to be considered, proposals formulated and decisions made. This Consultation is a widely representative gathering which speaks with some authority for the Pacific theological education scene, and therefore it is most appropriate at this time to consider these recommendations, and decide to pass them on (or not to pass them on) to the churches and theological schools of the area. The proposals and decisions made here will presumably be taken to the Assembly of the Pacific Conference of Churches next year, and even more importantly taken to the churches and the Theological Schools that you come from. We hope that they will bear some weight to bring real changes in what they are doing in Theological Education.

Now we will say something about the survey team, what they experienced and what they have to suggest. We visited some twenty theological schools and colleges in this part of the world. It was a very rewarding experience. I would like to speak first of all about the great values which we found in these schools.

We were impressed first of all by the deep and strong faith that characterises these schools. It was evident in their life of worship, their style of study and in their communication with each other. The depth and strength of faith in these schools is something which is more important than anything else that we can find and the greatest thing we can hope for. In that respect we pay honour to the schools we visited, and hope that they will maintain the highest standards which they have adopted.

Secondly, we were deeply impressed by the community life of the schools. Oka Fauolo was speaking about the breakdown of community in many islands in the Pacific, but I think that we find in each of the theological schools a community that is strong and vigorous. The schools work together with a sense of common purpose. That does not mean that they always agree, but when they disagree they disagree within a strong community. In many theological schools in many parts of the world each professor and each student just follows their own routine and develops their own ideas and goes their own individual way. In Pacific theological

schools there is a strong sense of working together, studying together, and thinking and acting together. We wish other parts of the world could copy and learn from the Pacific in this respect.

The third thing which was impressive was the close relation to the churches. The schools were obviously closely tied into the church's life. The church leaders pay a lot of attention to the theological schools. Often the theological schools were the main work of the central operations of the church. The church people are constantly visiting the schools, they know about what is going on, and likewise the schools know what is going on in the churches. This is a source of great strength. Even though it may at times cause difficulties, those difficulties are well worth bearing.

The fourth matter that we found impressive was the extent of self support within the schools. In most of these schools the students still provide a large part of their own food and sometimes their own housing. The students work together in their gardens, care for themselves and go fishing in groups. Faculty also go fishing and work in gardens. The Schools are still closely rooted in the soil and the life of the people around them, so these are pastors who will be close to the people. This element is as far as I know quite unique to the Pacific. Theological Schools around the world are not usually self-supporting to this extent. This is something which the rest of the world needs to hear about - to see how theological education is carried out close to the life of the people, close to the soil and the sea in this way.

Finally, the fifth strong impression was the extent to which these schools have local staff. There are very few schools where expatriate staff are still used. When I made a similar survey seventeen years ago the picture was very different. There were very few schools where local staff were used. The common pattern was that expatriates carried out theological education. Today, for the most part, theological education in the Pacific Islands is an operation led by Pacific Island teachers. That is a tremendous event and we respect that greatly.

Now let me speak about things where we felt improvements could be made.

1. Cooperation

There is already a great deal of cooperation among the schools. This is evident in the conferences that I have spoken of, and in the existence of SPATS. Much has happened to improve the life of the schools as a result of that cooperation. There has been a marked raising of standards, the spread of new methods of education, and a wider vision of theological education, which can in large part be attributed to either actions between schools or the relationships that they had with each other - the things they hear from each other and learn from each other. That is a very encouraging development. The most recent encouraging development in this line is the recent decision of the Vanuatu Council of Churches to take a new step in cooperation by agreeing that the churches should come together to form a United Theological College in relation to the new Presbyterian School that is just

being established in their country. So here we have a very encouraging new step in the whole field of cooperation between theological schools and churches.

I think it is fair to say, however, that cooperation still needs to be developed further. The problem of accreditation for schools needs to be cared for much more steadily. There is also a need to meet and share more regularly. Our hope is that as each school undertakes new ventures, takes new steps, new styles of curriculum, and moves in new directions, that they will do so in conversation with the other schools, giving consideration to how it may help or hurt the total picture of theological education in the region. This suggests the need for a declaration of commitment to growing cooperation between theological schools in the future days of theological education in this century.

2. Teaching Staff

The second area where we feel new developments and improvements could take place is in teaching staff. We suggest changes in three areas.

Attention needs to be given to the number of teaching staff. Not all schools need large numbers of teachers but quite a few schools need more teachers. They may have a small student body and therefore feel that a smaller number of teachers is enough. But actually you have to think of the number of teachers not only in relation to the number of students but also in relation to the number of fields of study. Therefore we feel that there is need for four or five teachers in a school if the various fields of study are to be covered adequately. Perhaps SPATS may want to introduce this factor into their standards of accreditation, or at least a strong proposal should be made to the churches and the schools as to the size of staff they should have.

The second matter with regard to staff is the length of time they have for their teaching service. We were distressed by how few of the teachers in the schools we visited had been teaching for a considerable length of time. Most of the teachers were new people who had only started two or three years previously. They were really beginners in the field of teaching their subjects. A common assumption seems to be that they would move on to other work before long. This is true of the large schools as well as the small, in the Catholic schools as well as in the Protestant: there is a kind of revolving door through which the faculty keeps changing. It takes quite a time to master a subject, become familiar with the books, and feel you can teach the subject with a grasp for all the developments. It takes three years at least for a person to master their subject area and begin to teach it effectively. We therefore suggest that proposals be made to the churches and schools that long term experience in teaching is honoured as something which is developed and maintained by schools and churches. Then teaching will be of the very best quality.

The third point with regard to teachers is the kind of experience that they might have. Here I am not thinking of the experience of teaching in a theological school, but the experience in a wider field such as experience in the church. We feel that it

is important before the person starts teaching that they have some experience of the life of the pastor and of the life of the church, so that they will know what they are training people for. They also need experience of further education. Most schools are upgrading their staff and improving their educational background at some point during their teaching. All schools should be reminded of the importance of constantly working to upgrade their staff.

3. Students

Most schools have more applicants than they can receive. This is a good situation in which to consider ways of improving the student body. We would like to urge that schools raise their entrance standards. It may reduce the number of students but in most places the numbers could be reduced without harming the need for more ministers, pastors and priests in the churches later on. We wish we could make specific suggestions as to the entrance level but there are variations in the educational systems of different countries. Some have highly developed educational systems and others less developed ones. It may be that countries with highly developed educational systems should require twelve years of higher education before they will take a person into theological studies while for those with less developed systems at least nine years should be required.

4. Library

This is one of the most serious lacks in the schools. Libraries are an essential element of the theological enterprise. Too often we found that the library was an often neglected appendage to the theological education process. So the first thing we would like to urge is that care and attention be given to the libraries. This means first of all that the library must only be open when there is somebody in charge who stays by the door and checks out the books as they are taken and notes the name of the person who took them. To have a library which is left open without somebody in charge is to open the door to the destruction of the library. The library should be kept clean, bright and shining so that students and faculty will want to go to the library and use it frequently. The books should be kept in proper order, and everybody should know what that order is, so that they can go into the library and find what they need straight away.

The size of the library is the second matter needing attention. We need to identify what is needed to provide adequately for staff and student needs. The four largest schools in the region, the Holy Spirit Seminary and the Martin Luther Seminary in Papua New Guinea, the Pacific Regional Seminary and the Pacific Theological College in Suva have about 15,000 books in each of their libraries. So 15,000 books is the basic number of books needed for degree level theological education or anything that is approaching degree level. At least a third of that number would be necessary for other schools if students are to be encouraged to get into books and use them, and faculty have the books they need to prepare their lectures and do some research. We did not find many schools at this level. Action is therefore needed as to the care of the library and its size.

5. Curriculum

On the whole we found that curricula are revised quite often and that faculty are concerned about curriculum. We suggest that in the revision and reworking of the curriculum the faculty do not just operate in isolation but bring in former students who have gone through a similar range of studies and share their ideas of where the curriculum might be changed. Church leaders may also suggest ways in which the curriculum may be changed in the light of their observation of how the young people are operating in the churches, where their weaknesses are and where the curriculum might be improved.

We also suggest that inter-relations between the schools be extended as they develop their curricula. This includes harmony in the books they are using and the subjects they are covering. This is important not only because of the needed interactions between schools but also because many schools send graduates to Suva. It would be most helpful to PTC if there could be some common background that could be assumed that PTC could build on, rather than continuing to have the diversity of backgrounds from which students come. In past years we tried to find out the actual books used in each school and the type of books that could be agreed on (such as the TEF Study Guides), but that attempt did not work out in practice.

5. Pacific Theology

More and more thinking on theological matters needs to be encouraged among the people of the Pacific. Sometimes the question is raised, what is Pacific Theology? I would say that any theology done by people in the Pacific is inevitably Pacific theology. So what we need is a way to encourage people to be doing that. One way to encourage them is to hold a Consultation such as this one and ask for background papers as well as papers that are presented in the sessions. We have an excellent group of background papers prepared by different schools in the region which shows that Pacific theology is already there to be expressed, and that people are eager and prepared to do something in this area when avenues open up. Another avenue is the Pacific Journal of Theology which SPATS has decided to restart. Issues related to Pacific Theology are broad and many and need further discussion, questions and recommendations.

Women in Theological Education

This issue has been discussed already and recommendations formulated. (See page 147).

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AT PTC

by Russell Chandran

I would like to speak mainly on matters relating to PTC. In one sense the reason for the appointment of the visitation team was the decision taken for the upgrading of PTC to the Masters level.

One thing that impressed us was the decision earlier taken to make PTC a centre for higher theological education for the whole of the South Pacific and to provide a unity of focus for the Christian ministry and mission of all the churches. We also noticed that over the years the graduates from PTC have gone to different island churches and have taken positions of leadership. So an important role of PTC is to provide a centre of the unity of the churches' mission. Therefore as we plan for the upgrading of PTC this consultation needs to reaffirm the commitment of the Pacific Churches to keep PTC as their institution for the organising of the Church's ministry and mission in the whole of the South Pacific.

Secondly, in relation to the upgrading of the programme itself we found the need for strengthening the infrastructure. When you put a higher story on a building it is important to see whether the foundation at the lower floor is strong enough to carry the weight of the upper floor. This is important for the development of the Masters programme. With that in mind we have some recommendations for the strengthening of the infrastructure. These include the important points given by Dr Forman. Already the PTC Council and the SPATS Council have accepted some of these recommendations and they are working on ways of implementing them. The improvement of the physical plant of PTC is also important. If PTC is really to provide the needed training programme for all of the Island Churches, PTC should be able to take the students sent by the different colleges. Over the last two years or so PTC has had to say no to a number of well qualified candidates sent by different churches because there was no accommodation available for the students. This has to be remedied. The main point however is the strengthening of the academic programme. It is here that the coordination of the programme between Island Colleges and PTC is crucial. The PTC faculty is working on the revision of the B.D. curriculum and SPATS is working on ways by which the different curricula may be coordinated.

One specific recommendation reads as follows: "In so far as the Masters programme is developed at PTC for enabling the churches in the Pacific to fulfill their ministry and mission more effectively, it is important that the churches and different theological colleges are committed to give full support to PTC for the implementation of the programme" (see p. 147). The PTC Council has given approval for the recommendations, but the Council decision must be strengthened by this Consultation, representing the Churches and theological colleges all over the South Pacific, giving full support to this upgrading programme.

My second point is the need for special care in selecting candidates for the Masters programme. This means that we should already start thinking about those candidates from different churches in theological colleges who are to be chosen for the Masters programme. We have a graded plan beginning with Pacific Church History as the first field of study at the Masters level. Although Suva has good resources available for the development of a Masters programme in Church History, we still need to build up adequate library resources and faculty for the programme. If the Masters programme is meant primarily for the faculty building of the different island colleges all fields should eventually have a Masters programme available. More resources therefore need to be developed for theological studies, ethics, biblical studies, pastoral studies and so on. We hope that within ten years we will have the resources needed for all of the branches of the Masters degree. But to begin with, the churches need to give careful thought to the candidates who are likely to benefit from the Masters programme in Church History.

My third point is that apart from the staffing needs of theological colleges it is also important for the churches to clarify the special ministries for which they would like PTC to equip candidates at the Masters level. Already our preliminary discussions with different church leaders and theological colleges indicate that beyond the priority given for strengthening of theological faculties certain specialisations such as Bible translation, Church administration and Pastoral Care are needed. This Consultation should therefore give some thought to the specialised areas where PTC should train students at the Masters level.

Finally, we cannot fulfil all of these missions of upgrading PTC without adequate physical resources, including money. Based on the decisions taken by the Council, the Council Finance Committee and the Executive have worked out certain tentative budgetary plans. It has been pointed out that this is the first time that PTC has seen figures leading to millions of dollars. But we have to be realistic. If the Masters programme is really needed for the whole South Pacific churches, then the South Pacific Churches should be willing to pay the cost. But we are also aware of the limitation of the Island churches. After assessing how much they can contribute, we should be willing with a sense of responsibility to ask our partners in our ecumenical fellowship to come to our help. In the context of our sense of responsibility and the awareness of our solidarity of ecumenical fellowship we should look at the needs and responsibly ask for help. The Consultation should therefore make specific recommendations to your respective island churches about their share in the financial support of the PTC for upgrading to the Masters level.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

Ming-Ya Tu'uholoaki: The recommendations only mention the academic level of entrance to theological colleges. I wonder whether the encouragement of female students to come to theological colleges can also be mentioned as well as the encouragement of different races. In addition the system is open to those who have already committed themselves to the ordained ministry. Is there a possibility of opening the doors to those who at that particular time do not want to commit themselves in this way but would like to have the opportunity for a theological and biblical enrichment of their own personal lives?

Elia Taase: I would like to thank our two friends for the reports. Two points need clarification. What is your assessment of the reaction of the churches and colleges that you visited with regard to their commitment for the upgrading of PTC? Also it seems to me that you will leave the selection of students to come to the Masters programme to the churches, but PTC will have responsibilities too. What are they?

Russell Chandran: With regard to commitment our impression was that on the whole all the island churches and colleges regard PTC as the centre for a higher level of theological education in the region, including the B.D. level. There were some churches however which were not sure whether they would need the higher level of people that PTC would train. There are also indications that some churches are sending people to different places. This may not be very helpful for strengthening the theological and missionary emphasis of the churches in the Pacific. The Churches of the Pacific have already taken a decision to make PTC their college for the higher level of theological education. If this consultation reaffirms this it will help both PTC and the island churches.

Secondly, about the choice of candidates. It is important that the candidates come not because of their own personal interest, even though that is an important factor. They should be interested in further academic work in equipping themselves for more effective fulfilment of their ministry. But it would be important that the candidates are chosen and sponsored by their colleges or their churches. In admitting the candidates PTC should certainly give priority to candidates who are sponsored and sent by churches rather than those who come on their own.

Sevati Twere: Firstly, the recommendations on which action has already been taken are the recommendations that were put to the PTC Council which met at the beginning of this year. The Council, representing the supporting churches, decided to go ahead with the Masters programme. We expect this will commence at the beginning of 1987. The Council has authorised the Executive to work out the details, and the implications in terms of physical plant, budget and related matters. We would like to share that budget with the consultation.

We intend to start small in the area of Pacific Church History, with four to six candidates.

In terms of physical plant we urgently need enough accommodation for the students the churches wish to send. Secondly we need a house for the Academic Registrar. Thirdly we need to provide accommodation, extra lecture rooms, as well as housing for the extra Church Historian.

I have also shared the capital needs of the programme with the Programme on Theological Education of the World Council of Churches at its recent meeting in Mexico, where I was well received, and also with mission boards and others who may be willing to help. Now we need to show our own commitment as Pacific Churches.

Pacific Church History is a very important subject to begin with at this point in time in our history. If we want to get off the ground with a Pacific Theology we need to understand who we are in terms of the past and who we are in the present, as a people of the region.

Lorine Tevi: It is very helpful for us to see the development of the whole work and the upgrading of PTC's involvement in theological education in the region. One of the contributions Pacific churches can make to the whole world is our emphasis on the wholeness of life in the Pacific. I am glad that the discussion is turning towards seeing the special ministries of the church needing to be upgraded academically. We also need to remember the theological education of graduates from other tertiary institutions in the region. They need opportunities for theological and ethical foundations to be sharpened and developed. Short courses should be offered for them. We also need programmes of in-service training for national leaders of our countries so that as they face social and secular challenges they can be challenged and helped theologically. We need to think of the theological education of people in the wider society and not just the church ministry.

Sam Amirtham: I want to express the delight of the Programme on Theological Education that the report has come to this level. We have been a part of the process from the beginning. PTE will do all that is possible on its side by courtesy of what we call Ecumenical Brokerage, to see that these recommendations are implemented. This whole effort is not just upgrading PTC, but part of the wider context of contextualisation and self-reliance in theological education. I would also like to underline the importance of the development of libraries. SPATS could sponsor librarian training courses and prepare a minimum required list of books for teaching all subjects. Six people could be asked to prepare a list of 5200 books in six areas which can be shared by all schools, and then some way found to procure the books.

Samuel Akle: The rest of the world is thinking in a similar way, especially Africa. For example the Theological Faculty of Yaounde in Cameroon is going to start at the Ph.D. level. The doctoral students will be rooted in typically African subjects. It is very important that they go back to their roots and do not just copy what has come from outside. We want our men and women

to be equal partners when they discuss theological issues with the outside world. But at the same time if we are from Africa or the Pacific we must know who we are, where we are going, what we have to give and what we can receive.

As far as libraries are concerned it is true that we need lots of books to do research in, but it is also very important that we also learn from the men and women in our villages who did not go to school, but have much to teach us, even though they are not official teachers.

William Tokilala: As President of MATS I will ensure that the recommendations of this consultation will be taken up by MATS meeting in September.

We tend to assume that the more we consume knowledge the more we improve the church. But we have to learn from our history. We tend to preach to the people rather than equip them for ministry. Our ministers need to understand the tactics of the modern world and relate our theological education to it. This means ministers should study sociology and political science. If our ministry is to be effective we have to stand with our lay people because our task is to help open the way for the Spirit of God to work in our lay leaders.

Sevati Twere: A mini-consultation for French speaking participants will be held next week. This is part of our whole struggle as we walk into the future together. (See page 152).

Jacques Nicole: From the beginning PTC has had the ambition to serve all the churches in the Pacific, including the French-speaking churches. The French-speaking parts of the Pacific tend to be marginalised and seen as not very Pacific. They don't speak English! I, an expatriate, was appointed French-speaking lecturer to PTC. We need to ask the French-speaking churches and also CEVAA what they can do to prepare theologians from the Pacific who can teach at PTC and bring the distinctive values of the French-speaking Pacific into theological education and thinking.

GROUP REPORTS

GROUP I:

1. Cooperation

There is a tension between the need for diversity and the need for unity. How do we keep a healthy dialectical conversation between those on a higher level of theological education and those on a lower level? Freedom at the local level must include shared loyalty to a common aim. It also includes freedom to serve local needs. This is also true of a regional theological institution.

There is anxiety that the upgrading of some theological schools will lead to increased competition throughout the region. We need to be clear about what we mean by 'upgrading'. Local colleges do not need to upgrade in exactly the same way as PTC. Each should be free to see their specific circumstances and need. Nevertheless as PTC grows stronger local colleges should also be strengthened. The progress of each is essential to the other.

Some churches continue to send theological students to New Zealand or elsewhere. It is often cheaper for example to send a student to New Zealand than PTC. Also in the past theological education beyond the islands has been thought to be academically superior. Financial considerations should not however be regarded as the determinative factor. Quality and suitability of training are more important factors. Cooperation, mutual support and dialogue at the regional level are essential in these matters.

2. Teaching Staff

(a) We agree that decision-making bodies of our churches should safeguard theological college staff from being shifted around. A seven year contract is recommended.

(b) Attention is needed on the question of anomalies in staff salaries in different institutions, and in different churches.

3. SPATS

SPATS needs to be strengthened. Changes in the President or the decision-making body should not lead to a radical change of policy. The strength of MATS is welcome. The relationship between the two bodies needs to be strengthened.

Increased funding is needed to support SPATS officers and enable them to do some travel in the region.

4. Students

(a) Local colleges should seek by every means possible to develop opportunities for theological education for women alongside men.

(b) The doors of theological colleges should be open to those who do not wish to train for ordained ministry in their churches.

(c) University graduates should be encouraged to undertake theological training.

5. Curriculum

(a) Former students and church leaders should be included in the curriculum revision process.

(b) SPATS should plan an increasingly useful role in the area of curriculum formulation and development. Colleges should share their curricula with each other so as they can see strengths and weaknesses in their own curricula.

(c) Denominational distinctiveness needs to be recognised and affirmed both at the local denominational level and in the regional ecumenical level of theological education.

(d) The ecumenical institutions in the South Pacific are pointing the way forward for all the schools, the colleges and the churches in their growing sense of unity in diversity.

GROUP II:

1. The encouragement of Pacific Theology

This could be done by means of consultations and a revived Journal, as mentioned, and also through theological writing workshops to provide the tools necessary for the effective expression of Pacific theological thinking.

2. Theological education for women

It is recommended that Churches and Colleges treat this seriously and take appropriate action. It is important however, not to impose this issue on the Churches, and the suggestion was made that a visitation team could be sent to listen to what the churches feel they need and want. But this might cause delay and cost a lot.

3. Teaching Staff

The Churches must be strongly reminded of what the report said about tenure, faculty development, and the need for pastoral experience. It is important too that teaching staff must not be sideline theologians, but actively involved in the life of their church.

4. Library Development

This is an urgent need. PTC and PCC could provide help for the local colleges. There could be a Pacific consultation of local college librarians. If overseas training is given it should be specifically in theological librarianship.

5. Curriculum development and revision

Colleges who have been engaged in this should make available to others what they have learned in the process. The results should be shared.

6. Masters Programme at PTC

The proposals should be endorsed. But some words of caution were expressed: perhaps the introduction of the M.Th. should be postponed until the B.D. programme is strengthened and its curriculum revised; the Masters programme should be carefully planned, without haste; we need to be sure the M.Th. standard is acceptable in the wider world; we need to consider whether it might be better to improve the B.D. and continue to send Masters candidates out of the region in order to widen their horizons - are we wanting a Masters programme simply because other regions have them?

GROUP III:

1. Cooperation

We must work to strengthen cooperation between theological schools in the region. Where there is more than one school in a country regular meetings between schools for worship, theological discussion and debate, and recreation should be arranged. Theological schools in Samoa have done this over a number of years and something similar should be introduced in other places. More interchange between staff at the local level should also be encouraged as well as regular meetings of staff teaching in a particular subject area.

At the regional or sub-regional level more interchange of students and staff should be encouraged. One way of doing this would be for a staff specialist in one area to be invited to teach in another school for a period. Information should be shared between theological schools in the form of a bulletin. This should include general information about significant events and more specialist information related to particular fields of study such as new developments in the field, recent books and local writing. Regional Summer Schools could be organised by SPATS for staff with a focus on a particular discipline each year.

2. Teaching Staff

Each College should have competent teaching staff in five main disciplines: Biblical Studies, Theology and Ethics, Church History, Worship and Liturgy, and the Practical Theology (Pastoral Studies and Christian Education). We support the idea of the importance of continuity of staff, and that any theological teacher should have experience of parish ministry. Some members of the group were not happy with non-ordained lecturers in theological institutions, but others saw qualified non-ordained lecturers as an enrichment of theological education. Qualified women should be included in the theological College faculty.

3. Students

More attention to careful selection and screening at both local and regional colleges is needed. SPATS should facilitate the sharing of information about criteria of acceptance for theological

training such as the examination system, and ways of evaluating the character and maturity of the candidates.

4. Library

A list of 100 basic books that should be in any theological college library should be drawn up by SPATS. Information about new books should be circulated. Church scholarship funds for students to buy books should be made available.

GROUP IV:

1. Cooperation

In addition to what has been recommended it is suggested that staff and student exchanges be arranged: This is a way of sharing the particular strengths and emphases of the different colleges.

Also, curricula should be coordinated to prevent any unnecessary repetition by PTC courses already taught at local level. SPATS could be the coordinating body.

2. Teaching Staff

The point about tenure is endorsed, but it is pointed out that the 'call' system used in some churches will continue to have the effect of drawing college staff away to well-salaried congregations.

Pastoral experience is certainly desirable, but we should remember that too long in the field after completion of studies can make the future teacher academically stale. A Junior ministers' continuing study programme would prevent new ministers from abandoning their books too readily once in the field.

3. Students

Higher entry requirements are desirable, but only for B.D. candidates. More is desired in a minister than high academic qualifications.

PTC could open its doors to university graduates who are not ministerial candidates, with the hope that they might become interested in a ministerial vocation.

4. Curriculum

It would be good to have a list of essential books prepared.

5. Pacific Theology

Support is given to the revival of the Journal, but of course, it will be mainly for academics: we must find ways of initiating the local church into the process of theological reflection and articulation. We need also to exploit such Pacific ways of communication as songs and dances.

6. Masters Programme

The recommendations are endorsed. But the Consultation must find ways of getting the message across to the local church. Specifically in regard to the financial needs, the churches need to do some thinking about this before coming to the PCC Assembly next year with firm commitments.

CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. RESOLUTIONS ON THE REPORT OF THE VISITATION TEAM

The following resolutions were agreed to during a plenary session on Thursday morning which discussed specific proposals arising from the report of the visitation team and issues arising from group discussions the previous day. [Notes from the Plenary discussions are included]. The consultation strongly recommended that the resolutions be taken back to the churches and theological colleges, and to the next Pacific Conference of Churches Assembly, and that action would result.

Cooperation

1. We endorse the action of the Vanuatu Council of Churches in proposing the unification of three theological colleges and we encourage other countries to move in the same direction where possible.
2. We believe that the introduction of higher degrees in certain colleges of the region is not an occasion for competition but an opportunity for fresh cooperation. Healthy growth will be achieved as Colleges and churches consult together regarding the new advances they plan to undertake. (1)
3. We recommend that SPATS be responsible for arranging for more sharing between Colleges of information regarding their curricula and syllabi (especially new developments), and textbooks. (2)
4. We support the plans of SPATS to facilitate the exchange of staff members and students between Colleges. The special strengths of different colleges need to be recognised in planning such exchanges. (3)

Teachers

5. We urge on the Colleges and Churches that longer terms of service be provided for theological teachers.
6. We recognise the need for faculty development through advanced study.
7. We see practical experience in church service as a desirable part of preparation of teachers, though the period of service need not be long.
8. We believe there is need for more women teachers on the faculties of theological Colleges.

9. No teacher should be expected to be in class for more than twelve hours a week.⁽⁴⁾
10. Teaching positions in Theological Colleges should be open to non-ordained as well as ordained personnel.

Students

11. Women students should be included in the regular programme of studies, and scholarship funds from the church or college should be available to them.
12. The Colleges should be willing to accept students who are not planning on ordination, and scholarship funds should be available to them.
13. There is need for better screening of applicants and the Colleges should share with each other their screening procedures.

Libraries

14. The libraries are deserving of far greater attention than they usually receive. In most Colleges they need to be cared for more assiduously and be enlarged considerably. They should be open only when someone can supervise the withdrawal of books. 5,000 books should be considered a minimum size for a diploma-level college.
15. We request that a list of essential books in each subject be drawn up by SPATS in cooperation with PTC.
16. Short courses for the part-time librarians of theological schools need to be arranged by SPATS.
17. Churches would do well to provide larger sums to theological students for the purchase of books.

Curriculum

18. When a College is revising its curriculum the staff need to consult with former students, church leaders, experts, and lay people in the congregations.

Pacific Theology

19. We suggest that tapes be used in addition to books and articles as a vehicle for the expression of Pacific theology.
20. We recommend to PCC that it provide some writing workshops for theological teachers who want to publish their ideas but need help in the methods of writing.

21. We urge the churches to initiate action by which the local congregations will be helped to reflect theologically through various art forms such as song, dance, drawing and decorating. We believe that the Pacific churches have a contribution to make to the entire world in the use of these modes of theological expression.

Women

22. We recommend to all theological colleges of the region that they provide a required course on the role of women in church and society. We believe that courses on this subject should also be provided in the Christian Education curricula of the churches.

Masters Programme and PTC Development

23. We reaffirm our recognition of PTC as a centre of advanced theological education in the Pacific.
24. The Churches should start considering the selection of candidates as soon as possible.
25. The first priority of the programme should be to equip staff for lecturing in the local Colleges, but the Churches should give some guidance about the need for training for translation, counselling and other special ministries.
26. We endorse PTC's call for finance and ask that the Churches discuss this and prepare to bring their financial commitment to the PCC Assembly in 1986.
27. PTC and PRS should explore the possibility of a one year post-graduate diploma in specialist areas such as communication, community development, pastoral counselling and Christian education.⁽⁵⁾

Notes on some points arising from the discussion:

1. The 'upgrading' of individual colleges needs to be properly understood. The Visitation Team reported on a need for a general lifting of standards in the programmes offered at present in many of the Colleges throughout the region. But 'upgrading' can also be understood as meaning the creation of new degrees at a higher level (eg. B.D. at some local colleges, and M.Th. at PTC). It was made clear that the addition of a higher degree at PTC would not mean that local Colleges would have to 'upgrade' to B.D. The level of training at the local Colleges is a matter for each Church to decide according to the local situation, and bearing in mind the need to improve theological education throughout the region.

2. The coordination of curricula between PTC and the local colleges was a particular issue here. It was recognised that this is a difficult and complex matter. A concern was expressed that the PTC curriculum sometimes simply repeated what had been already taught at the local college level. Part of the problem is that PTC graduates on the staff of the local Colleges sometimes taught the courses they did as students at PTC, and used the same textbooks. Even then, it would be expected that PTC courses would be taught at a higher and deeper level - they would not be just 'repetition'. It was felt that it would be wrong to work for a tight regulation of the curricula to be taught in the various local situations, because the needs of the Church in each place are different. Each College should be free to develop in the way most appropriate for that place. PTC should not have control over these things; it should however be allowed to fulfil its role as a regional College working at a higher level.
3. The experience of Rarongo in student exchanges with Martin Luther Seminary and a Catholic seminary was shared, as well as Bishop Patteson Theological College's student exchange programmes with Rarongo, Newton College (PNG), and the Central Theological College in Tokyo; Bishop Patteson also exchanged staff with St Johns College in Auckland.
4. At first it was proposed that it be recommended that each College be given enough staff to cover the five main theological fields, but after discussion it was decided that specifying the maximum number of contact hours was better. It was pointed out that each hour of class contact presupposed four hours of related work (preparation etc) outside the classroom.
5. This resolution was proposed and agreed to after the discussion on communication on Friday morning. Earlier a suggestion was also made that the particular strengths of each theological college in the region should be identified and that students from the region should go there for that particular emphasis in their preparation. For example, if a college was particularly good with a community development programme, students should be sent there for special training.

B. NUCLEAR FREE AND INDEPENDENT PACIFIC

The conference resolved to send the following letter to the August meeting of the Pacific Forum through the good offices of the Director of the South Pacific Bureau of Economic Cooperation, Dr Mahe Tupouniua. (All participants were invited to sign the letter).

P O Box 208
SUVA FIJI

Dr Mahe Tupouniua
Director
South Pacific Bureau for Economic
Cooperation
SUVA

We, who constitute the Consultation, therefore, appeal to the members of the South Pacific Forum not to adopt the treaty based on the Australian proposals but to work towards a treaty which will effectively safeguard the whole of the South Pacific region, sea and air as well as land, from the entry of any type of nuclear weapons through ships, aeroplanes, missiles or through any kind of vessels.

CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSULTATION

[illegible]

C. THANKS

The following expressions of appreciation were recorded:

Samuel Akle speaking on behalf of CEVAA and the CEVAA churches represented at the consultation expressed his thanks for the opportunity to be present. He reminded the consultation that "it is not because things are difficult that we shouldn't dare, but rather because we don't dare that things are difficult."

The Chairman thanked all who had prepared and presented papers, the visitation team, the staff of both PTC and PRS, and the administration and secretarial staff of PTC and PCC. He apologised to Anne Quehen and her helpers for the way that English speakers had made the work of interpreting difficult and expressed special thanks to them.

Oka Fauolo expressed the thanks of the consultation to the chairman, Bishop Jabez Bryce, for his wisdom and patience in leading the meetings.

The Consultation was able to express its appreciation to the people of the Tailevu villages of Namena and Nananu for the final feast and entertainment, as well as providing generously the meals for the participants from day to day, through the formal presentation of a tabua (whale's tooth). William Tokilala of the United Church of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands expressed the gratitude of the whole consultation.

REPORT OF MINI-CONSULTATION OF
FRENCH SPEAKING CHURCHES

MINI-CONSULTATION OF FRENCH-SPEAKING CHURCHES

Held on Monday 15 July, 1985

at

St John's (Anglican) Training College Suva

REPORT OF FRANCOPHONE LECTURER

by Jacques Nicole

I. HISTORY

Since its foundation in 1966, the PTC has had the aim of serving the Churches of the whole of the Pacific. Thus the French-speaking churches immediately became the object of particular attention, expressed in several constitutional measures (cf: Art. 7, paragraph 3; Art. 10, par. 2), such as the nomination of a bilingual vice-principal (John Garrett), the appointment of several lecturers with a certain knowledge of the French language, and once in a while the help of a visiting professor from the French-speaking world (like Professor R Martin-Achard from the University of Geneva).

However, the authorities of the College, those from the Churches of New Caledonia and French Polynesia, perceived before long that these measures would not suffice. The francophone students were meeting with difficulties, as much with personal as with academic plans, which impeded them from obtaining the results that one would have expected of them. This was happening especially during their first year.

In February 1976, following the annual session of the PTC Council, Principal Alan Quigley met with the General Secretaries of the two Churches concerned, Pastors Ajapuhnya and Doom, to ask their opinion concerning the eventual nomination of a francophone lecturer to join the faculty. The attitude of the Council, he clarified, was preferably to nominate a Pacific person to this position. Jacques Ajapuhnya answered him several days later insisting on "the absolute necessity" of a francophone element in the PTC teaching staff; he underlined the fact that most of the anglophone lecturers came from outside the Pacific and that if a Pacific person could not be found for this position, "it would be necessary to recruit from elsewhere, in Africa, Quebec (Canada), or in Europe", because of the great urgency (letter of 4.3.1976). John Doom, who at the time represented the French-speaking churches on the PTC Council, returned to Tahiti asking me to pack my suitcases for Suva! As we had only just arrived at Hermon Pastoral School nine months earlier and my children had just begun to adapt to their new mode of life, it did not seem to us very wise to impose a new and swift transition

into an English-speaking society on them so quickly. John Doom understood this well.

Nevertheless, the position was created in 1977, on the occasion of the visit to PTC early in the year of a delegation from CEVAA, which committed itself to finance the salary and housing for the position. CEVAA, it must be added, did not stop there but two years later accepted the responsibility of contributing financially to the construction of three flats for married students (Quigley Flats).

II. ACTIVITY REPORT

Things moved quickly after that: two months after the creation of the position I received a letter from Principal S 'Amanaki Havea. My wife and I decided, with the agreement of the authorities of the Evangelical Church of French Polynesia, to respond favourably. On our arrival in Suva in 1978, we received an extremely warm welcome, as much from the Principal as from the colleagues and the students. To demonstrate in a more tangible manner the importance that the Principal gave the francophone element of our college, he asked me in the beginning of 1979 to become his Vice-Principal, the functions of which I resigned from at the end of 1983. That same year I was asked to take care of accreditation matters within the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools (SPATS), a job from which I asked to be relieved in February of this year. Again in 1979, the year when the voice of the Pacific churches became particularly insistent concerning the Master's Programme, the Principal asked for those who could envisage it to work on a doctoral thesis, which was thought to be indispensable for teaching on the Masters level. I set myself to the task and, thanks to the understanding of the Principal and my PTC colleagues, and to the support of the Evangelical Church of French Polynesia, of CEVAA and of DM, I have almost finished it. Dedicated to the history of the translation of the Ma'ohi Bible, the thesis will constitute the first chapter of a course that I will offer in the Master's Programme on "Translating the Bible in the Pacific".

One must recognise that in the academic plan, my coming had not been very well prepared for by PTC, probably because my colleagues waited to see "From which log I warmed myself"*. to employ an expression which has nothing to do with the Pacific. On moving to Suva in 1977 I had been told to prepare a course on the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse which I have never had the occasion to teach. I was charged with the teaching of biblical languages, of participation in the Old and New Testament courses, and of a course on the Psalms intended for third year students. It was therefore necessary to adapt myself to the circumstances which permitted me to teach (other than Old Testament, Intertestamental Literature, and Hebrew) the New Testament and Greek in the absence of a lecturer so assigned, the History of the Reformation, and the history of the Christian Mission in the Eastern Pacific. What is more, I often had to organise seminars, or tutorials, in disciplines other than mine, with certain of my colleagues, intended for francophone students whose English or whose level of past preparation left much to be desired.

* A French expression meaning: "what I was made of."

The second part of my activities at PTC, while francophone lecturer, is pastoral. The students arriving from Papeete or Noumea with their family in Suva find themselves immediately confronted with diverse problems which necessitate assistance that is not purely academic: homesickness, the experience of the urban life, conflicts with representatives of other ethnic groups or of one's own group, discouragement, a complex of 'minority' faced with an omnipresent and all powerful English-speaking culture, or unresolved personal or conjugal problems.

The third dimension of my present ministry goes beyond the duties of the College. The difficulty at PCC of finding a bilingual staff person for the Suva office has frequently compelled us, Eugenia and I, to take on translation or correction tasks such as the PCC News, important documents, correspondence with the French-speaking churches, etc., or simultaneous translation for the occasional sessions of the PCC Executive Committee, General Assemblies, or for conferences or consultations on particular subjects. We have equally tried to be a link with the French-speaking churches in the Pacific by engaging in a regular correspondence with them about their students or about problems of the college, and with other member churches of CEVAA, particularly in Europe, where we had during our leave given many conferences, written many articles and taped a few radio programmes about our work at PTC and about the Pacific in general. We also tried to get some English-speaking Pacific theologians to attempt to learn the French language, in order that the francophones would not always have the impression that they had to make the effort at communication. It is in this way that, successively, Mrs Lorine Tevi and Dr Salesi Havea were able, thanks to the generosity of Cevaa, to initiate themselves into the French language in France and in Switzerland. Finally, we are actively involved, particularly during pastoral vacancies, in the Presbyterian Parish of St Andrew's, which exercises a real ministry of chaplaincy to students training at the international institutions of Suva, like USP, PTC and the Fiji School of Medicine.

III. DIFFICULTIES

Even though, in the opinion of our family, the balance of these eight years of presence and activity in Suva is judged positive, one ought not to mask some difficulties which arose over the course of the years. I will try to group them under three titles.

1. The minority feeling:

It is inevitable that, in an institution where English reigns as master, whether in the classroom, the chapel or the dining hall, the francophones seem sometimes to be the country cousins, and to feel that that are ignored or forgotten. This translated itself into occasional outbursts or bitterness, in the face of which the Principal and the lecturers generally knew to react with tact and understanding. The problem is made worse by the fact that France behaves in the Pacific with a great arrogance and very little sensitivity, in particular in its nuclear testing and the defence of its colonial interests, and this affects all the francophones. For example, even though I had many clashes with

successive French ambassadors and am a Swiss citizen, the simple fact that I speak French has sometimes made me suspect in the eyes of certain English-speaking people, both inside and outside of the Church.

2. Relations with CEVAA:

The creation of the position that I occupy was made possible, as we have seen, by the generosity of CEVAA: they understood how vital it was for the unity of the Church in a Pacific divided on both denominational and linguistic levels by its colonial past and even present, to permit future Church leaders to get acquainted, to share and to study together. Friendships formed in this way play, and will always play in the future, a valuable role in the building of a living and effective ecumenism in this region of the world. However, there is a structural problem which has at times disturbed the harmonious relations between PTC and CEVAA. This latter wants, with reason, a community of churches which exchange and share finances, personnel and experiences. What is the place of PTC, which is not a church, in this type of structure? We tried to send our requests through the French-speaking churches of the Pacific but with little success! We must realise that churches would rather send in their own needs, which are often pressing and urgent, before those of an institution which is not even established in their own island nation. Would it be possible in the future to give to PTC a status really comparable to that of the Faculty of Yaounde in Cameroun and to invite the Principal to participate in the annual Council of CEVAA?

3. Relations with the French-speaking Churches:

In requesting the creation of a francophone position, the churches of Maohi Nui and Kanaky put their faith in PTC in seeing it as the privileged if not unique centre of education for their future leaders: putting their faith in the Pacific. No problem of admission was posed during the first four years as the French-speaking churches found themselves at the end of the list in the number of students educated at PTC. But, three years ago, things began to deteriorate as the francophone students, although perfectly admissible on the academic level, had their entry to PTC postponed one year due to the chronic lack of married student housing. In this way, from one side, the Churches justly complained that this delay considerably disturbed their training programme, while, from the other side, PTC argues from the fact of its extreme poverty and its duty to serve all the churches of the Pacific in an equitable manner. To ensure that the gap will not grow any further, it is very urgent that the capacity of the housing at the college is rapidly increased in such a manner that the Churches can truly rely on it for the training of all their future leaders.

IV. PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

From the beginning it had appeared essential that the position of francophone lecturer at PTC be filled as soon as possible by a person from the Pacific: the francophone element, such as it is,

is sufficiently marginalised without further complicating the problem by continuing to employ for the task someone from outside the region. As early as 1979, therefore, I asked John Doom and Jacques Ajapuhnya to prepare a replacement for me for the end of the year 1982, the date of the termination of my contract. After speaking to the synodical Council, John Doom responded that the EEFP had no one available at the moment. However, 'Amanaki Havea soon after received a letter from a graduate of PTC, Pastor Hmana Lalie, who was at the time the Principal of Bethany Pastoral School on Lifou, expressing his desire to take up the position of francophone lecturer. 'Amanaki answered him describing the conditions for considering his candidacy: he must hold a Master's degree and be able to teach in the department of biblical studies. Arrangements were concluded thereafter between the Evangelical Church and the Uniting Church of Australia allowing Lalie to work towards a Master's degree in New Testament at the Melbourne College of Divinity. I myself agreed to prolong my stay for three years, to allow him time to obtain his degree. We wrote to each other regularly, he informing me about how his work was progressing, and I believed, in all honesty, that he would be ready to replace me at the end of this year. What was my surprise when I learned upon my return after vacation, in August of 1984, that Hmana Lalie had not yet started his Master's programme and that, what is worse, he had found himself in difficulty with the leaders of his Church. After long discussions with Principal Sevati Tuwere, and some friends including John Garrett and Hans-Ruedi Weber, it became apparent to us, Eugenia and I, that it was our duty to stay at PTC, to help in the establishment of a Master's Programme, which would exercise a minimum of continuity in the teaching staff, and equally, to allow the time for the French-speaking churches to arrange the training of some theologians at the required level to teach in a Master's programme, that is at the doctoral level. Though I speak of some theologians, I have only to learn a lesson from the experience attempted by Hmana Lalie, whose studies were disrupted by a number of factors, in particular by health problems. We have, then, until the end of 1990 to select possible candidates and to proceed with their training.

Allow me to attempt, in conclusion, to paint a portrait-model of my presumed successor who would be able to serve at least according to the following discussion:

1. Origin:

I myself see no contradiction in the fact that the sex, age and ethnic origin of the candidate are less a concern than the necessity that he/she be recognised as a Pacific theologian and seen by him/herself to be the representative of all the French-speaking people of the Pacific (churches) and not only of those coming from his/her own ethnic group.

2. Training:

Thanks to the understanding of the current Principal Sevati Tuwere, it is no longer essential that the candidate be a specialist in Biblical studies. It seems important to me, rather, that he/she be the holder of a doctorate in the discipline that he/she will teach, even if present conditions again require the nomination of someone with a master's degree: it is not necessary that while feeling a minority on the linguistic level, the candidate

should be at the same time the victim of an inferiority complex on the academic level in relation to his/her colleagues.

3. Ecclesiastical and personal experience:

It is essential that the candidate enjoys the complete confidence of his/her church and, in addition, that of the French-speaking churches of the region: in exercising their choice, these churches will have to be ready to make a truly costly sacrifice to their sister churches of the Pacific, comparable to that of giving the very pupil out of their eyes. It is out of the question that they should take the opportunity to unload on to PTC someone who is considered embarrassing, marginal or a rebel. It will also be necessary that he/she will have been ordained and have had significant parish experience. A candidate who is comfortable with him/herself, and enjoys the esteem, confidence and friendship of his/her people and church, will be able to resist the tensions and constant pressures which are always rising within an international, multi-ethnic and ecumenical community. It is equally necessary that he/she enjoy a balanced and happy marriage and family situation.

4. Financial situation:

It is important, as much for the quality of his/her academic work as for that of his/her presence within the College community, that my replacement be protected from any material worries and that a financial provision be created for regular visits to the French-speaking churches and to their theological schools. It would be equally necessary to provide for regular sabbatical leave which would permit him/her to pursue his/her researches, to prepare new courses, publish articles and books, etc.

I have come to the end of this copious report with the feeling of having forgotten many elements, which I will be able to share with you in the discussion which will follow. I fear that I have not been able to express sufficiently and clearly how much I have been happy and proud to serve Christ's Church in this manner and in this part of the world, and how the Pacific has become for myself and for my family like a second nature, which as you know already, sometimes causes little problems for us, particularly for my sons who find it difficult to get used to the idea of living and working for the development of a country that they know so little.

In agreeing to stay at PTC for five more years, I have consciously renounced, happily and without looking back, any hope of an academic career in Switzerland. This signifies that it is not impossible, if the Council and the Principal of PTC one day saw the necessity of it, that we might envision, Eugenia and I, again prolonging our stay at PTC for several years, but certainly not in the capacity of francophone lecturer!

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MINI-CONSULTATION
OF FRENCH-SPEAKING CHURCHES

I. Participants:

Pastor Wanir Welepane, Principal of Bethany Pastoral School,
Evangelical Church of New Caledonia and the Loyalty
Islands

Pastor Teriitua Faehau, Principal of Hermon Pastoral School,
Vice-President of the Evangelical Church of French
Polynesia

Pastor Ralph Teinaore, Secretary of the Executive Council of
the Evangelical Church of French Polynesia and lecturer
at the Pastoral School

Mr Samuel Akle, Assistant General Secretary of CEVAA (the
Evangelical Community of Apostolic Action, Paris)

Rev Baiteke Nabetari, General Secretary of the Pacific
Conference of Churches (PCC), Suva

Rev Ilaitia Sevati Tuwere, Principal of Pacific Theological
College (PTC), Suva

Rev Dr John Garrett, member of the PTC Executive Committee
and former bilingual lecturer at PTC, Suva

Pastor Jacques Nicole, current francophone lecturer at
PTC, Suva.

II. Introduction:

Jacques Nicole welcomed those participating in the mini-consultation and particularly greeted those who had jointly taken the initiative, Samuel Akle (CEVAA) and Sevati Tuwere (PTC); he thanked Anne Quehen and her two assistants for willingly seeing to the translation of all the day's proceedings.

After an introductory prayer, the chair was given to John Garrett who had accepted, as he had been the first bilingual lecturer at PTC, the request that he preside at the mini-consultation, at least in the initial part of the meeting, as other activities would call him away for the rest of the day.

III. Order of the Day:

It was decided to proceed first to the reading and discussion of a report prepared by Jacques Nicole on the history and perspectives for the future of the French-speaking lectureship at PTC, and following, to treat, one by one, the questions that participants would like to discuss.

IV. Report:

Jacques Nicole proceeded to the reading of his report, copies of which had been distributed, in English and in French, to each of the participants a few days beforehand. John Garrett thanked Jacques Nicole for his work but announced that he must leave the mini-consultation following the break. It was therefore decided that Jacques Nicole preside over the consultation to the end of the day.

V. Information:

As proposed by the Principals of the two French-speaking theological schools in the Pacific, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

"The delegates to the Mini-Consultation of 15 July 1985 in Suva ask the officers of the PTC for more information on the life, the difficulties and the academic progress of their students. In addition they propose to the annual Council of PTC that the Principal be authorised to send a copy of the academic dossier of each student to the Principals of the Theological Schools concerned."

VI. Preparatory Teaching of English:

Concerning the preparatory teaching of English to French-speaking students destined to pursue their studies at PTC, the consultation unanimously voted the following resolution:

"The delegates of the Mini-Consultation on 15 July 1985 in Suva, recommend to the French-speaking Theological Schools that they intensify the teaching of English within their programme of studies by calling upon the people and the means available locally. They ask PTC and PCC to envision the possibility of an intensive course in English lasting four weeks, just before the beginning of the academic school year, for the students coming from the French-speaking territories of the Pacific. Contacts should be made with the USP with a view to a common project in that direction."

VII. Correspondence:

On the suggestion of Sevati Tuwere and Baiteke Nabetari, it was decided that a letter, jointly signed by the chairman of the PCC, Bishop Jabez Bryce, and by the chairman of the PTC Council, Rev Lopeti Taufu, must be sent to CEVAA to express the recognition of the Churches of the Pacific of its loyal and generous aid.

Samuel Akle proposed that the French-speaking churches of the Pacific equally express by letter their recognition of Eugenia and Jacques Nicole for having accepted a further contract at PTC. In the same sense, Sevati Tuwere proposed

that a letter be written to the sending church of the Nicoles in French Switzerland (the Evangelical Reformed Church of the Canton of Vaud and Missionary Department) in order to thank them for the sacrifice that they have consented to in allowing the Nicoles to work in the Pacific.

VIII. Travel of the Francophone Lecturer:

In order to tighten the bonds between the French-speaking churches of the Pacific and PTC, Pastor Teriitua Faehau proposed that it be made possible for the francophone lecturer to visit each one of them every three or four years.

IX. Delay of Information:

Teriitua Faehau shared his surprise at having had to wait for the arrival of one of the Tahitian students in Tahiti before learning that a candidate whose name he had proposed would not be able to be housed at PTC in 1984. Sevati Tuwere willingly acknowledged that there had been some unfortunate delays in PTC correspondence, and he thanked Teriitua Faehau for not holding a grudge against him for it.

X. New Accommodation:

Concerning the project for new married student accommodation, Sevati Tuwere informed the participants that a source of financing was found for two of the four projected new houses for the year 1986. He wondered if it would be possible for the Pacific Churches who have the means to do so, to envision financing one of the others. The response to him was that the thing could be envisioned to the degree that the request is addressed to all the Churches without exception. Ralph Teinaore insisted that the Churches who eventually donate should not consider themselves as the proprietors of the flats for which they may have financially contributed. He acknowledged that PTC should be able to continue to serve all the Churches of the Pacific equally, whether they are rich or poor.

XI. Future Francophone Lecturer:

Jacques Nicole in his report had sketched a composite picture of his eventual successor, from which a discussion was begun. The necessity of doctorate level training was accepted. Unofficially, a certain number of names were mentioned - one from the Evangelical Church of French Polynesia, three names from the Evangelical Church of New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands. The representatives of each Church will share with their director organisations the concern to find rapidly a candidate to succeed Jacques Nicole. An official letter from the Principal will follow to support these first contacts and to invite the authorities of the Churches concerned to make their decisions rapidly, in such a way that a plan for financing can be put

in place with the least amount of delay. Jacques Nicole informed the participants that if no task was calling him in any urgent way to Europe in 1991, he would be able to consider giving six months (a year) extra to PTC to permit his successor to finish his training. Sevati Tuwere insisted on the fact that due to the competency of Jacques Nicole in the field of Pacific Church History, it is possible that PTC might ask him to stay longer, but not as the francophone lecturer.

XII. Bilingual Secretary for PCC:

Baiteke Nabetari, who had had to absent himself during a part of the afternoon, informed the participants of the failure of his search for a French-speaking Secretary for the Programme of "Justice and Development". He was therefore compelled to accept candidates coming from Churches in the English-speaking part of the Pacific. There remained, nonetheless, an urgent need at PCC for a bilingual secretary-interpreter to help the General Secretary prepare for the General Assembly of the Pacific Conference of Churches in Western Samoa in 1986. He urgently asked CEVAA and the French-speaking churches for their help. Samuel Akle promised Baiteke Nabetari the active cooperation of CEVAA. The proposal was then made to ask Anne Quehen, who had demonstrated throughout her stay at PCC the competency and the capacity for the work required for this task, to agree to come back for a year after her next leave in France. Anne Quehen responded that she was not hostile to the idea but that she needed to know in advance about the conditions of the work and of accommodation. A meeting was then fixed for the following day between Samuel Akle, Anne Quehen and Baiteke Nabetari, in order to reach an agreement.

XIII. Conclusion:

Due to the flight plans of certain of the participants, the Mini-Consultation had to end the same day. The chairman then thanked the participants for their contribution to the success of this first consultation and wished them a safe return to their countries. After a prayer of thanks and of intercession, the meeting was called to a close.

Jacques Nicole

Francophone Lecturer at PTC

A P P E N D I X

APPENDIX I

REPORT OF VISITATION TEAM

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS

with special reference to the role of the Pacific
Theological College

Report of a Study Team consisting of Russell Chandran, Charles Forman and Ilaitia Sevati Tuwere, who visited the Pacific theological schools, June-September 1984.

In presenting this report on theological education our first duty is to express appreciation for the overwhelming hospitality extended to us by each of the theological schools. Wherever we went we were welcomed heartily and cared for royally. Though our travels were long and strenuous they were made a continuous joy because of the kindness we received and the friendships we formed. The community of theological educators and theological students in the Pacific is a fine example of Christian fellowship and service. To all in that community we extend our thanks.

SCHOOLS VISITED

Our travels took us to twenty schools. These were, in the order visited:

École Pastorale Hermon, Tahiti
Pacific Theological College, Fiji
Davuilevu Theological College, Fiji
Pacific Regional Seminary, Fiji
Tangintebu Theological College, Kiribati
Sia'atoutai Theological College, Tonga
Bible College of the Presbyterian Church, Vanuatu
Lololima Seminary, Vanuatu
École Pastorale Bethanie, New Caledonia
Holy Spirit Seminary, Papua New Guinea
Martin Luther Seminary, Papua New Guinea
Rarongo Theological College, Papua New Guinea
Pacific Adventist College, Papua New Guinea
Bishop Patteson Theological Centre, Solomon Islands
Piula Theological College, Western Samoa
Moamoa Theological College, Western Samoa
Malua Theological College, Western Samoa
Kanana Fou Theological Seminary, American Samoa
Takamoa Theological College, Cook Islands
Marshall Islands Theological College

The two largest schools were Roman Catholic (Pacific Regional Seminary and Holy Spirit Seminary). The rest were Protestant or Anglican. It is clear that the Catholics have a different way of organising theological education from the Protestants. The Protestant pattern began long ago when there were no airplanes and travel about the Pacific was slow and difficult. Because of these conditions the Protestants established a theological school for each church in each country. The Catholic seminaries have been founded only in recent years when air travel has bound the islands more closely to each other. Consequently the Catholics have created two regional seminaries which between them serve all the Pacific islands. They are, naturally, much stronger institutions in terms of resources and numbers of teachers and students than are any of the Protestant or Anglican schools. They each have over a hundred students, ten to fourteen teachers and twelve to fifteen thousand library books. The only Protestant school that equals them is Martin Luther Seminary in Papua New Guinea which also has about a hundred students, ten teachers plus a chaplain and two librarians, and some fifteen thousand library books. The Pacific Theological College in Suva has the same number of books and librarians, but it has a much smaller student body and teaching staff. Protestant theological education would doubtless be in much stronger condition if it were concentrated in two or three united regional colleges, like the Catholics, but that would require the undoing of too much history to be a practical possibility.

As the list of seminaries given above makes clear, our visits to Vanuatu were to a Bible College and a junior seminary rather than to the three schools that train people for ordination. However, we were able to meet representatives of those three schools at a conference. The schools are located at Aulua for the Presbyterians, Lolowai for the Anglicans and Banmatmat for the Churches of Christ, all fairly inaccessible locations. These three are perhaps the poorest, weakest and smallest theological schools in the Pacific. If they could be combined into one institution they would all benefit greatly. We suggested this possibility at the conference, and the suggestion was received with interest. The process of reaching agreement to unite would, of course, be a long one. Unfortunately the Presbyterians are now looking for a new location for their Bible College and Theological school. When that decision has been made, as it will be within a year, and the buildings for the new institution have been erected, it will be very difficult to think of moving to some other new centre for the three churches. All three denominations may thus be condemned to continuing their inadequate work. There may be a faint possibility that the newly built Presbyterian centre will be put at a location where the other two churches will be willing to come in and erect additional structures. That may be the only hope of cooperation.

The wide range in the quality of the seminaries is shown in the degrees or diplomas which they give. The PTC and Rarongo give the B.D. degree and the Catholic seminaries are planning to give degrees soon. The B.Th. is given at Martin Luther Seminary and will be given by Pacific Adventist College when it has been in operation for four years. Accredited diplomas are given at Bishop Patteson Centre, at Tangintebu and a few other places. Sia'atoutai trains a few of its students to sit for the Melbourne Dip. Theol. But about half the schools provide their students

with only a certificate or an unaccredited diploma. This fact reveals the need for a great effort at improving theological education in the Pacific. Accreditation of diplomas should be universally established. Too many of the island churches have been content with an inadequate level of training for their future ministers.

TEACHERS

There are over a hundred teachers working in the twenty schools we visited but they are by no means evenly distributed among the schools. The Catholic and Lutheran schools, as already mentioned, have sizable faculties. But in the Vanuatu schools there are only two teachers per school. Bethanie, Kanana Fou and Davuilevu each have three full-time teachers. The school in Tahiti tries to work with only one full time teacher and various others coming in for a course or two, while in Rarotonga all the teaching is done by pastors each of whom comes in for a course and no one has full-time responsibility for the school. In this last case and in Kanana Fou the under-staffing may be explained by the fact that the school is just getting started and a better arrangement is being planned. But in the other cases it seems that under-staffing is a chronic condition which is allowed to continue indefinitely. It is nearly impossible for a faculty to cover the wide range of theological studies adequately with less than four teachers and churches which allow their seminaries to continue at this minimal level should be challenged either to build up their faculties or else close their schools and send their students to some neighbouring country where there are better provisions.

Even four or five teachers, as are found in Tangintebu and Piula, are questionable for their adequacy. It is not till one gets to places that have six teachers -- Malua, Bishop Patteson, and Sia'atoutai -- that there seem to be enough teachers to deal with the major fields. PTC with seven and Rarongo with eight are better still.

Another cause for concern is the short tenure of teachers. In every school we visited most of the teachers had been teaching for only a year or two or three. Usually they had little expectation of staying on for a long time. Here and there we found a person who had been in the school for five or even eight years, but these were rare. Even a large and well-staffed school like the Pacific Regional Seminary reported that its teachers come on three-year appointments and that few appointments are renewed. The secretary of the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools stated that he has found that most members disappear within two years so that new people must be constantly found to carry responsibilities. Evidently those who are in charge of theological education in the Pacific have little conception of the time that it takes a teacher to master a field of study. Usually the first years of teaching are a kind of apprenticeship in which the teacher is learning his way around the field. After five or ten years he can be regarded as a real authority on his subject. The short terms provided for Pacific island teachers mean that there can be no serious theological scholarship or masterful teaching in this region. Every church

and school should seriously re-examine its policies in this regard and move toward changing them.

On one point it is a pleasure to record great progress and a generally excellent situation. Almost everywhere the teachers in the theological schools are now Pacific islanders. When a survey similar to this one was made seventeen years ago there were few indigenous teachers and every school except for one had a European at its head. Today there are few expatriate teachers and fewer still expatriate heads. Tahiti still keeps one French teacher full time and two part time. PTC has four expatriates on its staff, but since it teaches at a higher level than most schools the process of indigenisation can be expected to take some time. Outside of these two schools only the Catholic, Lutheran and Adventist schools have any foreign teachers. Even in these three churches the process of indigenisation is beginning and several islanders have been added to the teaching force in recent years, but the great majority of the teachers are still expatriates and the heads of the schools continue to be Europeans.

STUDENTS

There is no shortage of young people desiring theological education. In almost every country we visited we were impressed by the large numbers of youths applying for admission to the seminaries. Often there were so many applicants that only five percent of them could be accepted by the Schools. Only in the two French-speaking schools, Hermon and Bethanie, were there fewer applicants than the schools could receive. It appears that in the foreseeable future there will be an adequate supply of new ministers for all the Protestant churches with the possible exceptions of Tahiti and New Caledonia. The Catholic Church is another matter. While there are plenty of students to fill the two seminaries, over half of them drop out before reaching ordination and even if all completed their work there would not be enough to provide the number of priests that are needed. Only in Fiji, Samoa and Tonga and in the dioceses of Bougainville and Rabaul in Papua New Guinea do the prospects look hopeful for a fully indigenous priesthood in the near future. The small territory of Wallis and Futuna, it should be added, is the only one which has already achieved such a priesthood. However, though the Catholics in most areas have a long way to go, it does appear now, as it did not a few years ago, that the problem can be solved and that eventually there will be an indigenous priesthood throughout the Pacific. The possible exceptions to this are Tahiti and New Caledonia where there is almost no progress as yet. Perhaps in countries where the schools are not prepared to teach at university-graduate level, such candidates could be sent straight to the PTC for their education, but this would require the provision of an introductory year at the PTC, as we will be suggesting later in our report.

One thing that limits the education of students after they enter seminary is the fact that they have to spend a considerable amount of time producing their own food. In most seminaries the students have to grow their own vegetables and root crops and have to catch their own fish. Only at the PTC and the two major

Catholic seminaries are students entirely free from this demand. Obviously academic standards will always be limited by this method of student support, and if academic standards were the only consideration the students should be provided with food in other ways. But financial considerations and broader educational considerations may dictate otherwise. To provide all the necessary food would be a great financial drain on the churches or on the students' families. Furthermore to give up gardening and fishing would isolate the students from the great majority of their fellow countrymen and their future parishioners. They will be ministering in societies where most people maintain themselves by gardening and fishing and only a small elite lives by the food production of others. It would be a serious loss in the broader education of the students if they no longer had the experience of the majority of the people and became a part of the small elite. In other parts of the world the church is trying to identify more fully with the common people. In the Pacific this identification has always been a part of the church's life. It should not be given up easily.

LIBRARIES

The Libraries are usually the weakest part of Pacific theological schools. In fact the present condition of most of the libraries is a disgrace.

In just a few places respectable libraries are maintained. The PTC, the Lutheran school and the two major Catholic seminaries, each with close to fifteen thousand books as previously mentioned, possess good, solid and well kept libraries, though even they are barely large enough for degree level work.

They should be considerably enlarged if any of them are to serve really adequately for a B.D. degree. Of the diploma level schools, Tangintebu and Bishop Patteson have well kept and well planned libraries which should serve their purpose if they are continuously developed, though they are nowhere near the size of the libraries previously mentioned.

In the rest of the schools we found serious library neglect. Acquisitions had dwindled in recent years. Many books had disappeared because of inadequate controls on borrowing. All over the shelves we found books out of place so that theology books would be in the history section and books on the Bible would be mixed in with social ethics, making the books essentially unusable because they were unfindable. Multiple copies of books assigned for class reading did not exist. In general the library, which lies at the heart of any advanced education, was being treated as a marginal concern which would be cared for at some future date.

We cannot stress too much the seriousness of this situation. The deplorable state of the libraries calls into question the legitimacy of the schools themselves. They cannot claim to provide a theological education for future ministers if they allow their libraries to continue in their present state.

A few suggestions were made to us for the improved acquisition of books and we repeat them here, though they are only minor matters. It was suggested that the PTC share with other schools a list of its acquisitions each year in order to give the others some idea of what they might buy. The PTC might also send to other schools an annual list of the books which are required reading in some of the important seminaries outside the Pacific area. Several schools might decide to make their book purchases together so they could get a discount on the price. Most publishers will give a 30-40% discount if ten or more copies (sometimes five or more copies) are purchased at once. Since the text books used in classes are usually purchased already in lots of over five or ten, this suggestion would not produce any savings on text books, but it would provide impressive savings on library purchases.

When it comes to the buying of text books, most schools should begin placing their orders a year in advance of the time the books will be needed. In a number of schools we found that text books were arriving long after classes had begun and therefore the early weeks of the academic year lost much of their usefulness. Earlier purchases would take care of this problem.

We commend these various suggestions, but reiterate that they will not solve the main problem. What is needed is far greater care for the library and far larger budgets for book purchases. Students then must be led to make greater use of the books that have been provided.

CURRICULUM

The curricula of most of the schools follow a common pattern. They cover the basic Biblical, theological and historical subjects. They also introduce their students to preaching, pastoral counselling and Christian education. Many of them deal with Pacific island customs and how the minister can fit into them. Given the limitations of time there is probably little more that they can be expected to cover.

Since all of the Protestant schools send some of their graduates to PTC for advanced education there is need for closer coordination of the material covered in the basic courses. The work of PTC would be much more valuable to all students if they came with a common background. If all the schools could agree to cover certain books of the Bible in their exegesis course, then PTC could assume that much knowledge and go on to other books. If all the schools could agree on certain standard materials to be covered in history, theology and ethics, then PTC could begin at more advanced levels in those fields. Such coordination would require frequent consultation and a more advanced level of cooperation between the schools.

COOPERATION

There is a good spirit of comradeship between the theological schools of the Pacific. The schools are interested to hear what is going on in theological education around the region and they are eager to learn from each other and to cooperate with each other. In the area covered by the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools (MATS) this cooperative spirit is given an effective channel of operation. Workshops or conferences of the teachers are held every two years and conferences of the students are held in the alternate years. Accreditation visits are made regularly. Creative scholarship has vehicles for expression through the journals, Catalyst and Point, and now a Melanesian Journal of Theology is being planned.

In the area covered by the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools (SPATS) these types of cooperation existed in the past but the Association has become somewhat inactive in recent years. It is crucial that the Association be reactivated and that regular meetings be held. New life will be breathed into many aspects of theological education if the Association becomes a vigorous body. More exchange of thought can be carried on if meetings of scholars are held and if a theological journal can be started again.

Admittedly SPATS is an expensive organisation to operate because the distances it covers are so great and the air fares are so high. The MATS area is much less expensive to operate in. But if MATS can get the money to hold a meeting of some sort every year, SPATS should be able to secure funds enough for a meeting every two years. Accreditation visits, even if they are carried on at greater intervals will, if they are made regularly, provide a constant pressure for improvement which is greatly needed. It is distressing to see some schools which continue without full accreditation year after year. A theological journal would provide a stimulus to fresh thinking and writing and should cost no more in this area than elsewhere in the world.

In addition to the things it has done in the past, SPATS should undertake some new tasks. The coordination of curriculum which has already been mentioned in the previous section, is one of these. Then, also, new levels should be covered in accreditation. At present SPATS has made use of accreditation standards for only the theological diploma. It should improve and use its standards for the B.D. Also for the B.Th., if that degree is likely to be offered by some schools, standards will be needed. Degrees should not be allowed to appear in the Pacific without any standards against which they can be measured and in terms of which they can claim acceptability. It is anomalous that the PTC has been offering the B.D. for so many years without any regional standards to which it must adhere and by which it can judge itself and be judged.

If SPATS is to develop accreditation standards for these degrees, it probably should call in experts from outside its area to help in that process and in accreditation visits. Should it transpire that PTC decides to give a master's degree, SPATS will need to develop standards in the same way for that level of education.

If SPATS is to operate as an effective agency, it should not be as closely tied to PTC as it has been in the past. It should have a structure which clearly represents all the schools which compose it. Furthermore the past dependence of SPATS on the volunteer work of the PTC faculty has put too great a burden on the members of that faculty. The most desirable arrangement would be to have the Mission Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches serve as the secretary of SPATS, giving part of his time to this work, and to have the other offices rotate among the faculty members of the various schools, of course including PTC.

We would also like SPATS to explore more effective use of the Satellite facilities available for it to have more regular communication with member institutions and to develop programmes for continuing theological education, seminar discussions etc.

PACIFIC THEOLOGY

The continuing search for a Pacific Theology is very much part of the purpose for which PTC was conceived and built more than twenty years ago. Part of the statement of purpose of the College reads:

"To make available to the world the distinctive theological insights which God has given to Pacific Christians".

This statement carries with it a great task to be undertaken. And it falls on all those who run the College the responsibility of making it real.

We are aware of the fact that there is a great deal of theology embodied in the thousands of sermons preached, prayers offered, songs and lyrics composed and speeches delivered by ordinary Christians all over the Pacific. This theology is in the languages of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. Its ways of reasoning are what we might call today unscientific.

Is this is what is meant by "distinctive theological insights" that Pacific Christians should make available to the world? If so, how should it be handled, organised and presented? Should it be in the scientific way as Western Theology? What place does it have in the wider ecumenical theological debate? These questions are important and basic to the search and articulation of a Pacific Theology.

Part of our task as a Visitation team was to find out in what way or ways Pacific Theology is being expressed and articulated today. This is not easy because very little has been written on the subject. This does not mean that there are no theologians in the Pacific competent to do this work, but there is probably no organised way provided to allow the work to be done. We can only make a few observations:

First, there seems to be a real need for formulating a working definition of what Pacific Theology means and what its task is supposed to be for the Church. Like other investigations, an investigation or a search for a Pacific Theology

is guided by initial assumptions about what it is and how we are to seek it. It is an advantage to make the different definitions of theology explicit in a working definition. It would be self-defeating for Pacific Theology to allow the different assumptions to go their ways, one for Melanesian Theology, another for Coconut Theology and so on. The purpose of a working definition is to provide a basic orientation which will help us to appreciate our differences on the one hand and to build up our common solidarity on the other. A working definition does not have to be perfectly right or accurate. Its purpose is to be useful for the service theology has to render to the life and mission of the Church.

Second, there is need for the churches to identify the key issues that face and challenge us as a Christian community in the Pacific today. There are issues that require great attention by the churches in the villages and in the wider society which affect human beings and shape communities. Identifying these issues is part of a theology for the Pacific. As we moved around in the different Pacific Islands we could see and hear issues beginning to be named and discussed in different places - the relationship between men and women in the Samoan culture, the development of cargo cults in Vanuatu and the Solomons, the Pastor as an animator in New Caledonia, the divorce between intellectual enquiry and spiritual life among University students, the understanding of the exodus in the light of the overseas migration of Tongans, the significance of the konhot tree in the experience of the Marshallese people etc. These are just some issues peculiar in each place and they also have importance for the region as a whole. There are also other key regional issues which call for common attention and concern. These include the present trends or developments in the Pacific Islands towards urbanisation and individualism and the whole question of the place of the past, its culture, customs and traditions in the present and the future. Issues in each place should be identified and taken up for inclusion in the theological curricula. Some schools are already doing this. PTC may have to do more in this direction. Closely related to this is the concern for ecumenism. This is to be taken care of not just by offering ecumenism as another course of study, but by constantly seeking to be ecumenical in its total structure, its liturgical life, and in the way the common life of the PTC community is organised.

Third, there seems to be an apparent lack of systematic theological reflection on the issues mentioned above. Different theologies have been mentioned, like coconut theology, Melanesian theology, theology of the Pacific way etc. But the impression we got was that they have yet to be articulated and systematically formulated in order to fulfil the role of theological expression. For example, what does coconut theology mean to the experience of the Pacific people? Has it shaped to any degree the course of events in the villages and communities? How is it related to the story of Jesus? We also observed some attitudes to theology, common elsewhere also, which regard theology as a discipline independent of the other areas of study such as Biblical studies, Church History and Pastoral Studies. This needs to be corrected.

We have noted that some of the students' theses kept in the "strong room" of the PTC Library are of good quality. They are reflections on issues peculiar to the Pacific Islands and are valuable contributions to Pacific Theology. It is desirable to seek the help of a good editor who can put them in a form suitable for publication for the benefit of the Pacific people as well as others.

Fourth, very few ex-PTC students engage in theological research of some kind or do some writing after they leave the College. We came across only two who were doing some research and writing, one a Samoan and the other a New Caledonian. Reasons for this may be the pressure of work some are facing. For a good number of others, no incentive is provided to stimulate and encourage them. Teachers at the PTC also have a full load of teaching which does not leave them any time for research. A lecturer at Bishop Patteson Theological Centre in the Solomons is an excellent musician and composer of songs and hymns. But the way the curriculum is structured and the pressure of work imposed on him leave no time for music. Music, songs and hymns can contribute much to theology. Very little theological writing is done at present. The fact that at present there is no Theological Journal in the Pacific may partly explain the lack of interest in writing. We recommend the revival of the Pacific Journal of Theology which can become an effective instrument for theological writing. It can also provide a platform for further articulation of a Pacific Theology and for wider sharing of theological insights.

WOMEN'S PROGRAMME

Most of the theological colleges have some kind of Women's programme. The quality of the programmes differ widely. The programmes are planned mainly for the purpose of equipping the students' wives for the roles they are expected to play in the different churches as pastors' wives. The content of the programmes also vary a great deal. They include training for conducting Bible Study, Child care, Home economics, Cooking classes, Family planning, Sewing and embroidery, different kinds of handcrafts such as making mats, baskets, handbags, dolls, etc. In a few schools there are some women taking the regular Theological Studies programme along with the men. We were quite impressed with the exhibitions of the products of the women's groups at Piula College and Malua College in Western Samoa. In other places also we were told of the work done by women but were not able to see their products.

The best organised and the most effective of the Women's Programmes in the South Pacific is what is offered at PTC. The full-time coordinator and the staff of the Etina Havea Centre contribute a great deal to the effectiveness of the PTC programme. The printed Handbook of the Women's Programme points out that the following objectives are aimed at:

1. a greater awareness of the role women can play in the Church and in the development of their own countries.
2. a deeper knowledge of the Bible and the skills to pass this knowledge to others.

3. leadership and teaching skills so that one can help others to grow in mind, body and spirit.
4. practical skills which one can use in one's own home and community and can pass on to others.
5. ways of enhancing one's own family life and of helping to improve the quality of life of families to whom one will minister in the future.

The programme is also open to lay-women from Suva. The courses in the Biblical, Theological and Social studies and the practical skills give a family good orientation for the leadership roles pastors' wives have in the different churches in the South Pacific.

At the same time, we could not help observing that the women's programmes on the whole support the traditional patterns of women's roles in the churches. There are, however, women in different Pacific Islands who have begun to question the traditional patterns based on male dominated structures in Church and Society. Some of them seek the fulfilment of their aspirations for their Christian calling by going to serve in churches outside the South Pacific. This is a serious loss to the South Pacific Churches. Even apart from this the Church has to consider whether its calling is only to conform to traditional cultures or to provide guidance for renewal through new patterns of cooperation between men and women in obedience to the Gospel. The situation demands that the churches in the South Pacific do some rethinking of the role of women in the ministry of the Church and in Society on the basis of the teaching of the Bible as well as in the light of recent developments in the wider ecumenical fellowship. In order to promote such rethinking the Women's programme should include courses or seminars designed to make all students, men and women alike, aware of the current ecumenical trends on the question of the roles of women and men in Church and Society. It is equally important that the candidates taking the Diploma and Degree courses in theology are adequately equipped for giving proper guidance to people on this issue. This may be done by introducing in the curriculum specific courses on the role of women in the ministry or/and including this perspective in the syllabuses of appropriate courses in Biblical Studies, Church History, Theology and Ethics and Pastoral Studies.

THE ROLE OF THE PTC

One of the main tasks assigned to the visitation team was "to make specific proposals for PTC to upgrade its academic work to the Master's level and to consider other options at the Bachelor's and Diploma levels so that specialisation can take place." Therefore when we visited the different islands in the South Pacific we asked the Faculties of the theological colleges, the members of their Governing Boards and the Church leadership how they would respond to the proposals for the upgrading of PTC to Master's level. Everywhere the response was positive. In some of the islands, particularly in Kiribati, Western Samoa and Tonga there were strong affirmations of the importance of developing a Master's programme in the South Pacific. Only in Vanuatu

and New Caledonia some uncertainty was expressed about priorities for their programme of theological education. While recognising the need for a Master's programme they feel they will continue for sometime to depend on the diploma and B.D. levels for their ministerial leadership.

In some quarters, particularly at Piula Theological College in Western Samoa and at Sia'atoutai Theological College in Tonga there is a misunderstanding that when PTC is upgraded to Master's level the local island colleges may upgrade to B.D. level. Some of the questions raised and opinions expressed also implied that some had misunderstood the proposal and the work of the visitation team. They had assumed that when PTC is upgraded to Master's level all B.D. and Diploma level education will be the responsibility of the different island colleges. This misunderstanding was partly based on a report in the PCC News Bulletin about the visitation team which had mistakenly included in the functions of the team "recommending which of the local colleges may be upgraded to degree level." We had to explain that this was not in the mandate of the visitation team and that PTC would continue its B.D. and Diploma levels of theological education even after developing the Master's level. The B.D. and Diploma levels at PTC are important not merely for the churches in Fiji but for churches in the whole South Pacific region. While it is important for the South Pacific churches to have a ministry trained, with adequate understanding of the local situation and culture, through the different island theological colleges, it is equally important that they have a cadre of ministers with a wider regional and ecumenical perspective, so that the churches in the different islands do not become too parochial in outlook. It is important that the churches in the South Pacific continue to benefit from the ministry of persons trained at a regional institution like the PTC. We had several sessions with the PTC Faculty and we are happy that they unanimously endorse the proposal for upgrading PTC and are willing to participate fully in the development of the facilities for upgrading.

In most of the islands the support for the proposal of upgrading was related to their concern for developing adequate Faculties of their Theological Colleges. In addition some also expressed the relevance of upgrading to the need of specialised ministries such as Counselling, Christian Education, Church Administration, Bible Translation and the like.

We were quite impressed with the number of PTC graduates in key leadership positions in all the islands. Most of the members of Faculty in the different Theological Colleges are also PTC graduates. But we also observed that several Faculty members even in the different island colleges have upgraded their academic qualifications through higher studies in New Zealand, Australia, USA or Europe. The B.D. level education at PTC is not sufficient to meet the needs of theological education in the region. The need to upgrade PTC to a higher level is obvious.

It should also be pointed out that almost all other regions in the World have developed post-B.D. higher levels of theological education, some at Master's level and some even at Doctor's level. It is very important that the Pacific region also develop higher levels of theological education. Theological Colleges and Churches

should have the benefit of leaders who have done their advanced theological study in the milieu and in constant awareness of the context of the region. Their categories of thinking and interpretation of the Gospel should not all be shaped by what is learnt in the context of other cultures such as European or American.

Having been satisfied about the importance of and urgency for the development of a Master's programme at PTC for the benefit of the churches in the South Pacific for the fulfilment of their ministry and mission in the region we looked at some of the related issues.

1. In order that the Master's programme in PTC may be a strong and meaningful one with an academic standing on a par with Master's programmes in other parts of the world the present B.D. programme at PTC, which will be the main basis for recruiting candidates for admission, has to be improved so that it will have a better quality of academic strength and stability. Based on our observations we would like the following points to be considered:

a. Make more explicit that the B.D. is a post-graduate degree and therefore admission is for candidates who have reached the degree level of a secular university by acquiring a B.A. or B.Sc. of USP or comparable universities or have qualifications in theological study which can be assessed as of equivalent academic status.

In view of the increasing influence of USP in the Pacific region and the growing number of members in the different churches with high academic and technical qualifications it is important, as we have earlier suggested, that the Christian ministry in the region include personnel with comparable academic standing and competence. Special efforts need to be made to recruit suitable candidates by presenting the challenge of the ministry to men and women with a high level of secular learning or technical qualifications. In assessing the qualifications for the ministry, along with evidences of genuine Christian commitment and ability to give testimony to a life transformed by the power of the Gospel, we also need to look for high academic merit.

The question of whether candidates with a B.A. or B.Sc. degree or equivalent academic qualifications should also be required to have a period of theological study in one of the island Theological Colleges before admission at PTC needs to be carefully considered. An unduly long period of theological study before qualifying for the B.D. degree is not desirable. It should be possible for PTC to admit candidates with a secular graduate degree to the B.D. programme with a minimum experience of orientation to his/her church, island culture, etc., without a period of formal theological study.

If PTC adopts a policy of admitting such candidates some thought should be given about a suitable introductory course or orientation programme to be given in preparation

for entering the B.D. Curriculum. It will be helpful if two parallel introductory programmes with the possibility of some overlapping (eg. N.T. Greek, Sociology of the South Pacific, etc.) are developed, one for secular graduates and the other for those who come with theological qualifications needing remedial courses. Those successfully completing the introductory programme will then join others qualified for admission on the basis of their previous theological studies and do a full three year programme of study to qualify for the B.D. degree.

b. We would like the PTC Faculty to do some critical review of the B.D. Curriculum with a view to making appropriate revisions so that the candidates taking the B.D. degree get a fairly balanced and systematic group of the main branches of study in the B.D. curriculum. It will be good if the syllabi of the different courses are periodically subjected to interdisciplinary scrutiny. The Faculty should also explore the possibility of offering more electives to enable students to specialise in particular branches. An introductory course in Christian Ethics should be a required course for B.D. and for Diploma. Attention also needs to be given for offering suitable courses on Worship, Spirituality and Liturgiology.

2. The objectives of the Master's Programme need to be clarified. In earlier discussions and also in our discussions with different theological faculties mention has been made of the need to develop Pacific theologies.

The Master's Programme has to be so developed that this need is met. One of the important factors for meeting this need is the development of persons competent to articulate the Christian faith from the perspective of the Pacific people and in a manner challengingly relevant in the different Pacific contexts and cultures. Another urgently felt need is the improvement of Faculties in the different colleges. Therefore a high priority has to be given to produce qualified men and women who can be appointed as theological teachers in the different colleges. Along with this we also need to bear in mind the need expressed in some of the islands for people with specialisation in certain areas of ministry such as Christian Education, Counselling, Church Administration, Bible Translation, etc.

3. With regard to the length of the Master's course, there are two models, the American model which is a one year course and the model followed in Australia, New Zealand, South East Asia and India which is a two year course. The American Model is not intended for equipping theological teachers. In most Seminaries and Universities the Master's programme is a preparation for entrance to the Doctoral programme. In so far as the priority in the South Pacific is at present for the training of theological teachers it is appropriate that we adopt the two year model for the Master's programme at PTC.

4. With regard to the nature of the programme three models are possible.

- a. Research leading to a thesis.
- b. Courses of studies specialising in one of the theological disciplines.
- c. A combination of course work and research leading to a thesis, specialising in one of the theological disciplines.

Following the discussions we have had with the PTC Faculty and others our recommendation is that PTC programme adopt Model C.

5. Candidates applying for the Master's programme should, in addition to having the B.D. degree or its equivalent, have given evidence of good study habits and special interest in the area of specialisation desired. An appropriate entrance test for each main area will have to be designed.

Normally the candidates should be sponsored by a theological college or a church or a Christian organisation which plans to employ him/her.

Normally a person will not be admitted immediately after the completion of the B.D. or equivalent course. He/she should have had sufficient practical experience in the exercise of some form of Christian ministry to be able to relate academic study to the realities of the Church's Ministry and Mission. At the same time it is not desirable that a person be out of touch with theological studies too long to be able to get back to a programme of rigorous study. A minimum of two years of practical experience is desirable.

6. Resources to be developed for the Master's Programme

- a. Library. The collection of books and periodicals relating to the area of the Master's Programme has to be improved. This will mean an initial expenditure to secure some basic books and back numbers of periodicals and additional recurring budget.
- b. Faculty. Additional Faculty will be needed. In addition to the Faculty needed for the B.D. and Diploma levels there should be at least one more full-time Faculty member for each of the areas in which the Master's programme is offered. Further for each area in the Master's programme there should be not less than two competent teachers of whom at least one should have doctoral or equivalent qualifications. A person not having a doctoral or equivalent qualification may be accepted to teach in the Master's programme only if he/she has taught at the B.D. level for several years (normally a minimum of three years).
- c. Administration. It will be helpful to designate a member of Faculty as Dean of the Master's Programme so that the Administration of this

programme does not become an additional burden to the Principal. In so far as the Master's programme will involve additional responsibilities for the Registrar it is desirable to secure a suitable person as Registrar who might also be a part-time Librarian or part-time Lecturer. Additional secretarial staff may also be needed.

- d. Buildings to accommodate additional students and staff, to provide additional class rooms and seminar rooms, office rooms for new Faculty have to be planned. The Library also needs to be expanded to provide more space for books and periodicals and additional reading room space for Master's students.
- e. Discussions with the PTC Faculty and the Rector of PRS have suggested possibilities of cooperation in Library development and some sharing of Faculty resources. Both institutions would be strengthened if they could develop their libraries in such a way as to complement each other rather than duplicate each other. The more advanced courses, which are given as electives, could also be shared between the two schools, thus providing a larger range of electives and avoiding duplication. These improvements through cooperation between the two schools are greatly needed for the present level of studies and will be even more needed if the master's programme is introduced. Possibilities of using Library and Faculty resources of USP in the areas of Pacific History, Sociology and Anthropology may also be explored.

7. Priority listing of subjects in the order in which the Master's programme may be developed was considered in meetings with the PTC Faculty. This was discussed, bearing in mind both the priority needs in the region and the resources already available. At present the Faculty position, Library strength and the availability of archives relating to Pacific Church History in Suva suggest the possibility of developing a Master's programme in Church History with special emphasis on Pacific History without too much effort. It is therefore recommended that the first Branch for the development of the Master's programme be Church History. However the urgency of developing facilities for the programme in Biblical Studies (Old Testament and New Testament) because of the demands of Bible translation and Biblical Interpretation, Theology and Ethics because of the concern for theological and ethical reflection in the Pacific context, and Pastoral Studies because of the importance of different aspects of the Pastoral ministry in facing the challenges of the Pacific realities today was also voiced and it is important that the PTC have a time-bound plan (say a ten year plan) for developing the needed resources for Master's Programme in all the main branches of theological studies with special emphasis on their relevance in the Pacific region.

APPENDIX II

RECOMMENDATIONS OF VISITATION TEAM

I. Recommendations on which action has already been taken.

(a) By the PTC Council

The report of the Visitation Team was received by the Council of the Pacific Theological College at their annual meeting held on January 30 to February 1, 1985.

The recommendations relating to the development of the Master's Programme at PTC were accepted by the Council, and the Executive Committee was directed to take the necessary steps for the implementation of the detailed recommendations, making specific reference to those on staffing, women's programme and Library facilities.

It was also decided that the Master's Programme be inaugurated in 1987.

Following the recommendations for the strengthening of the Administration of the College, the Council also decided to appoint a full-time Registrar, and accordingly steps are being taken to secure a suitable person for the position.

As recommended by the Visitation Team the Master's Programme will begin with Church History as the field of study, with special emphasis on Pacific Church History. In view of this, steps have also been initiated for securing an additional Faculty member qualified to teach courses in Church History at Master's level. The Master's Programme in other subjects will be developed in stages, so that within ten years PTC will be able to offer the Programme in all the major fields of theological study. The tentative plan is to begin offering the programme in Theology in 1990, Old Testament in 1992, New Testament in 1994, Pastoral Studies (Christian Education, Pastoral Counselling and Worship) in 1996 and Ethics in 1998.

In consultation with the Faculty, the Executive Committee is also considering ways of strengthening the B.D. programme so that the Masters Programme will have an adequate infrastructure.

The Finance Committee of the College has also worked out the financial implications of the programme and in the light of their forecast for a ten year period the College has prepared a Financial Appeal addressed to Churches in the

Pacific as well as to supporting Churches and Mission Boards and other possible donor agencies outside.

With regard to the promotion of Pacific Theology the PTC Council has also authorised the Faculty to plan the publication of some of the better-quality theses written by students, after suitable editing.

(b) By the SPATS Assembly

The Visitation Team's report was considered by the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools (SPATS) at their General Assembly meeting held at the PTC on 4th and 5th February, 1985.

Responding to the recommendations of the report, the SPATS Assembly made some important decisions with a view to enabling SPATS to become a more effective instrument for cooperation and coordination of work among the theological colleges in the region. One of the decisions was to have at least a part-time General Secretary for SPATS and to request the PCC to permit the person appointed as Secretary for Mission to serve also as part-time General Secretary for SPATS. Another decision was to reconstitute the Accreditation Committee and to review the Constitution in order to improve the effectiveness of the functioning of SPATS.

II. For Action by the Consultation :

The following are the observations and recommendations which we would specially like the Consultation to consider and act upon.

1. Cooperative Approach

Theological education in the Pacific has been immeasurably strengthened since the various schools came out of their isolation and began thinking and planning together for their common task. Standards have been raised, new methods have been introduced, and a wider range of interests and concerns has appeared. For healthy growth it is imperative that a cooperative spirit be maintained and that there be continued thinking together and planning together. As the schools begin to consider new directions and new levels of work, they should do so in conversation with the whole community of theological education, considering how their plans fit into the whole community's work and receiving the comments and critiques of their partners on their plans. This Consultation might well issue a declaration of commitment to continued cooperation and consultation as the next steps are taken along the road of theological education.

2. Teaching Staff

Steps need to be taken to provide more adequate strength for the teaching staff in the different colleges. The colleges, as well as the Churches supporting them, have to develop staffing policies which will contribute to continuity and stability. It is important that Churches seconding their ministers to serve on the staff of theological colleges do not apply to such candidates their policy of periodic transfers.

Another problem we have observed in a number of theological colleges is the appointment of persons to the teaching staff immediately after their theological studies, without any practical experience in pastoral or other forms of Christian ministry. This is a very unsatisfactory situation with serious consequences on the quality of ministerial education. Churches and colleges need to take appropriate steps to see that normally when a person is chosen for appointment to the teaching staff of a theological college he/she has the background of several years, at least two or three years, of practical experience in some full-time ministry, preferably pastoral ministry.

3. Students

The policy for recruitment of candidates for ministry and theological education needs to be reviewed in order to improve the quality of candidates. Churches need to consider the possibility of recruiting candidates with university degree qualifications who, after a short period of orientation, may be admitted straight to the B.D. degree course.

4. Curriculum

(a) Periodic revision of curriculum and syllabi of courses. It will be good if the Faculties of colleges get the participation of former students and Church leaders in the Curriculum revision process.

(b) Coordination of the curricula offered in different colleges. One of the objectives of such coordination, is to enable PTC to maintain its B.D. curriculum at an advanced level with a distinctive character as a programme for ministerial and theological education.

(c) While working out the coordination of theological curricula attention should also be given to the issue of the length of time devoted for theological studies. With proper planning it should be possible for some candidates at least to reduce the total number of years spent in the different Island Colleges and at PTC for completing the B.D. degree requirements.

5. Pacific Theology

Encouragement should come from the Churches and theological colleges for promoting the Pacific Journal of Theology. It should be noted that creative or original Pacific Theological writing need not necessarily be something unique. The main point is the reflection by Pacific people on the different dimensions of the Christian faith in dealing with the cultural, spiritual, philosophical, socio-political issues of the Pacific as well as of the global community.

6. Women's Programme

(a) The place of women in the Church and in society in the Pacific region needs to be critically reviewed by the Churches as well as by Theological Colleges.

(b) The curriculum of the Women's Programme, as well as the B.D. or Diploma curriculum of the colleges, should be such that men and women participating in these programmes are made aware of the practical and theological issues of the roles of men and women in Church and Society, and equipped to give the right leadership in their respective Churches.

7. Master's Programme

In so far as the Master's Programme is developed at PTC for enabling the Churches in the Pacific to fulfil their ministry and mission more effectively, it is important that the Churches and the different theological colleges are committed to give full support to the PTC for the implementation of the programme. There is a need for special care in the selecting of candidates to be sent for the Master's programme. Apart from the staffing needs of the theological colleges it is also important that Churches clarify the special ministries for which they would like PTC to equip candidates at Master's level. It is equally important that Churches respond to the Financial Appeal of the PTC appropriately.

APPENDIX III

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Rev Puafitu Faaalo	Representing Council for World Mission Church of Tuvalu FUNAFUTI TUVALU
Rev Winston Halapua	Diocese of Polynesia P O Box 35 SUVA FIJI
Rev Daniel Mastapha	Chairman of PTC Executive Committee Wesley Church Butt Street SUVA FIJI
Pacific Regional Seminary	Faculty
Pacific Theological College	Faculty
Pacific Theological College	Executive Committee Members

Speakers:

Dr Mahe U Tupouniua	Director, South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation
Hon Tupuola Efi	Leader of the Opposition, Parliament of Western Samoa
Rev Tevita Havea	On behalf of Rev Dr S 'Amanaki Havea Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga
Mrs Ming-ya Teng Tu'uholoaki	Lecturer, Methodist Theological College, Davuilevu, Fiji
Rev Peteru Tone	Lecturer, Malua Theological College Western Samoa
Mrs Suliana Siwatibau	Director of Energy, Government of Fiji

Rev Dr J Russell Chandran	Member, Visitation Team
Fr Gabriele Daunivucu	Lecturer, Pacific Regional Seminary Suva
Rev Dr Geoffrey Wainwright	Professor of Systematic Theology, Duke University, Durham, USA
Mr Seru Verebalavu	Manager, Lotu Pacifika Productions Suva

Consultation Organising Committee:

Rev I S Tuwere	Chairman
Rev Dr J Russell Chandran	Visitation Team
Rev Baiteke Nabetari	PCC, General Secretary
Rev Faitala Talapusi	SPATS

Conference Coordinator:	Rev Faitala Talapusi
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Accommodation Coordinator:	Mr Alfred Jack
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Catering Coordinator:	Mr Seru Verebalavu
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Rev Dr S Toa Finau
Rev Fr Stanley Good
Rev Bruce Deverell
Pastor Jacques Nicole
Dr Raeburn Lange
Mrs Watalaite Ratuville

* * * * *

APPENDIX IV

LIST OF GROUP MEMBERS

A. Morning Sessions

1. TAIHIA HASINI

Jabez Bryce
Finau Tu'uholoaki
Laumua Kofe
Suliana Siwatibau
Tangimetua Tagatatutai
Samuel Amirtham
Baiteke Nabetari

2. WILLIAM TOKILALA

Oka Fauolo
Gabriele Daunivucu
Tevita Havea
Fiama Rakau
Elia Taase
Wanir Welepane
Samuel Akle
Lopeti Taufu
Lothar Engel
Chris Walker
Itubwa Amram

3. RALPH TEINAORE

Larry Hannan
Teriitua Faehau
Samuel Sahayam
Seru Verebalavu
Charles Forman
Tupuola Efi
Sevati Tuwere
James Ayong

4. ETUALE LEALOFI

Baranite Kirata
Russell Chandran
Uilelea Uilelea
Josés Sali
Peteru Tone
Helmut Horndasch
Lorine Tevi
Faitala Talapusi
Tennyson Bogar

B. Afternoon Sessions

1. OKA FAUOLO

Gabriele Daunivucu
Tevita Havea
Fiama Rakau
Samuel Sahayam
William Tokilala
Samuel Amirtham
Baiteke Nabetari
James Ayong

2. BARANITE KIRATA

Teriitua Faehau
Ralph Teinaore
Eutale Lealofi
Josés Sali
Peteru Tone
Lopeti Taufu
Lothar Engel
Chris Walker
Sevati Tuwere

3. LARRY HANNAN

Russell Chandran
Uilelea Uilelea
Suliana Siwatibau
Tangimetua Tagatatutai
Charles Koete
Seru Verebalavu
Charles Forman
Tupuola Efi
Itubwa Amram

4. FINAU TU'UHOLOAKI

Jabez Bryce
Taihia Hasini
Laumua Kofe
Elia Taase
Wanir Welepane
Samuel Akle
Helmut Horndasch
Lorine Tevi
Faitala Talapusi
Tennyson Bogar

Note: Observers participated in groups, but their names
were not listed.





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